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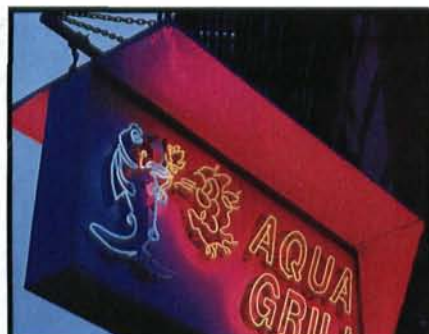
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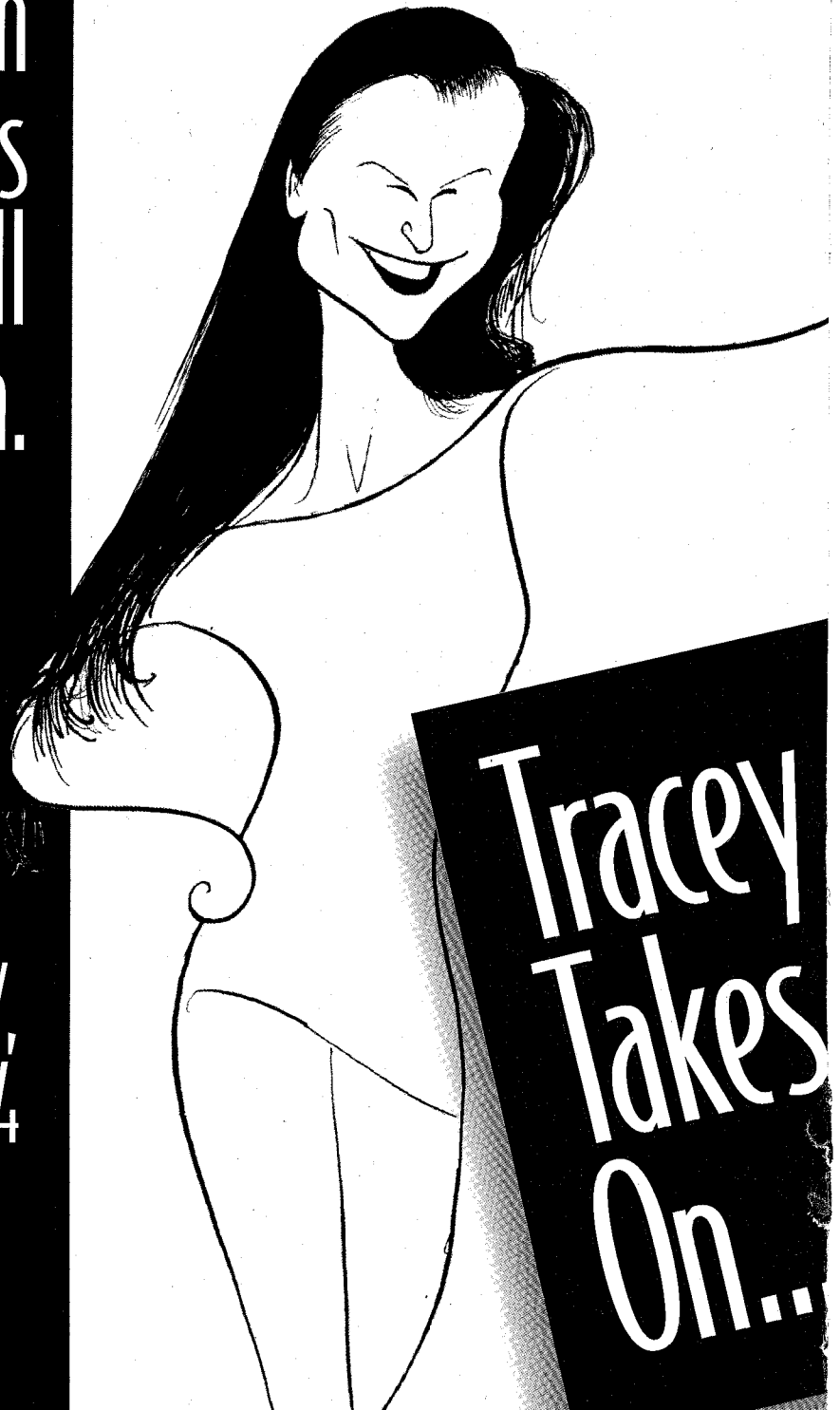


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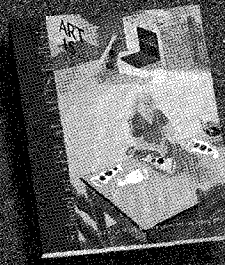
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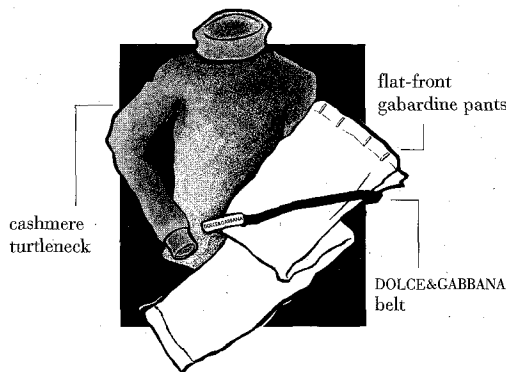
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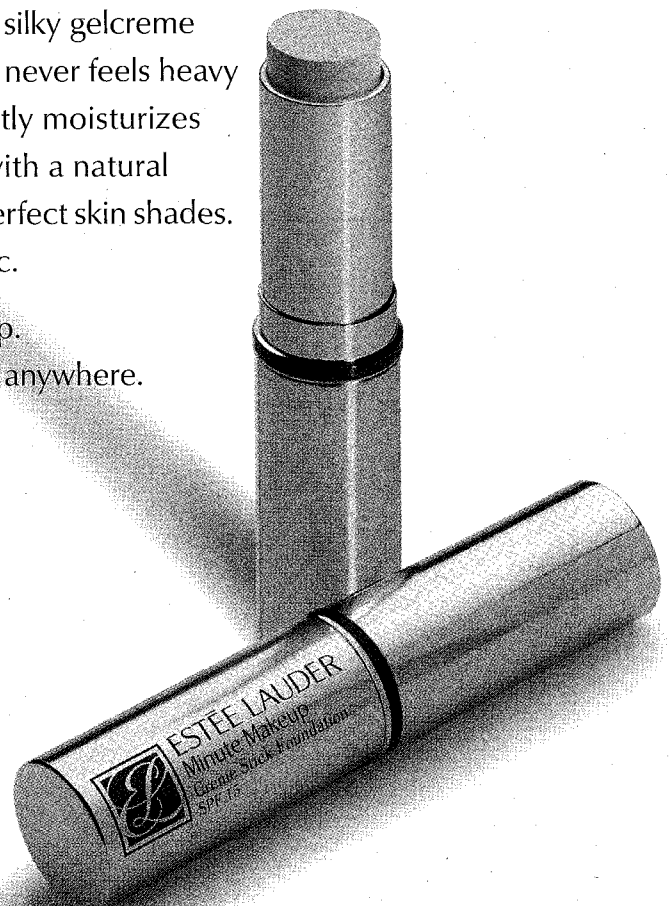
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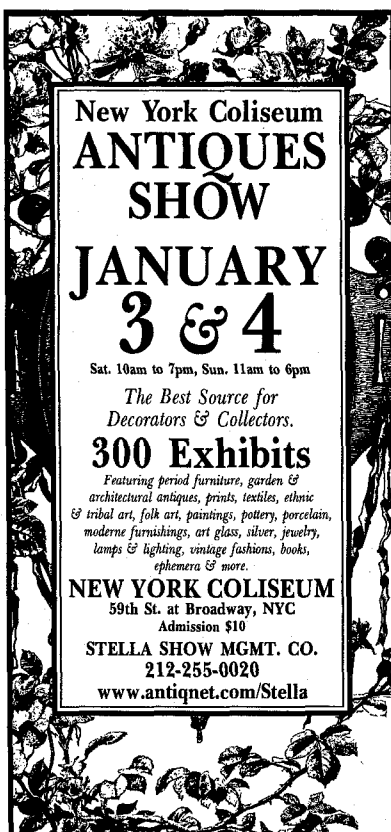
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LETTERS JANUARY 5, 1998

Victimology

Sam Manzie's double life as killer and abuse victim; Lyme disease and ADD—overlapping symptoms should raise suspicions.

NINA BURLEIGH'S ASSERTION regarding the murder of Eddie Werner that Sam Manzie "may have been more of a victim than Valerie Werner realizes" is a twisted non sequitur ["The Killer Next Door," December 8]. While it can only trivialize the Werner family's unimaginable suffering to argue over who may properly be called the victim here, the media's misguided attempts to make Sam the victim, presumably so as to make sense of a senseless crime, require a response.

Manzie's confusion about his "sexual identity"—that a 15-year-old boy gets to the point of having a sexual identity and willfully engaging in sex with a pedophile is a sick comment on our society—and the antisocial acts in which he engaged are irrelevant to the Werner case. Sam Manzie raped and killed a defenseless and trusting 11-year-old boy. The victims of the rape and murder of Eddie Werner are Eddie Werner, his mother, his father, his 9-year-old sister, his 6-year-old brother, and the rest of his family. Period.

Jeffrey Schreiber

HIGHLAND PARK, N.J.

Kids on Drugs

IT IS A TRAGEDY THAT NO ONE IS DOING A comprehensive study on the frequency and overlap of learning-disabled and pediatric-Lyme-disease cases, particularly in areas where Lyme disease is endemic in the tri-state region ["This Is Your Child on Drugs," by Susan Brenna, November 24]. We've observed that large numbers of learning-disabled children appear in school systems located in the towns with the highest incidence of Lyme disease. In fact, the more endemic an area for Lyme disease, it seems, the greater the number of children in the school systems who are being treated with amphetamines, stimulants, and antidepressants for attention-deficit disorder.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to 104700.2560@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.

der and learning disabilities but not with curative antibiotics for Lyme disease.

Wouldn't it be incredible if there were a \$20 million clinic devoted to further understanding and better distinguishing these two illnesses, which feature similarly dramatic neuropsychiatric presentations, including attention-concentration deficits, short-term-memory loss, word-finding and language difficulties, obsessive-compulsive disorder, mood and panic disorders, depression, and suicidal ideation—in essence, many of the symptoms depicted in your description of children defined as learning-disabled?

Barbara Goldklang

Suzanne Stuttmann

Co-Presidents, Lyme Disease Coalition
PLEASANTVILLE, N.Y.

I WAS DISTURBED BY SOMETHING BROOKE Neidich, board chairman of the NYU Child Study Center, said: "I don't think I can bear another story asking if kids are overmedicated." At a center where two thirds of the children are given Prozac and other medications, the board chairman had better bear it.

It is unnatural for children under the age of 6 to sit at attention in chairs. Children's natural state is to be active and squirmy, wiggly and mobile. With the increasing lack of stay-at-home parents, the increase in junk-food consumption, and a society that dresses and treats small children like adults, it is no surprise that we are beginning to see the consequences described in Ms. Brenna's article. Certainly, drugs are an easy way out.

In the old days, discipline was maintained by beating kids into submission. Now we drug the kids into submission. How easy. How sad.

Pat Gallant

MANHATTAN

YOUR ARTICLE "SAVED BY THE PILL," BY Carrie Carmichael [November 24], includes an outdated characterization of adoptive families. Carmichael writes about Joan and Paul and their adopted son, Adam. That Adam was adopted is of no relevance. Such a description serves only to reinforce stereotypes about adoptees' not being their parents' "real" children. Such reporting strengthens outdated views of the adoptive

process—as do newspaper obituaries that distinguish between the deceased's adoptive and birth children.

Mitchell R. Semel
MANHATTAN

Versace Veracity

IN "SURVIVING AT THE TOP" [BY MAER Roshan, December 15], Donatella Versace says she "accept[s]" negative press. Would that it were so! In fact, she soon contradicts herself, bragging about how she successfully sued several British publications for libel for reporting speculation about organized crime's involvement in her brother Gianni's murder. Why sue in Britain, and not in the U.S., where similar reports have run? Easy. Her Majesty's libel laws make winning a snap there.

Indeed, contempt for free expression is part of the enduring Versace style. Her company's image watchdogs have demanded advance approval of stories about the label and banned journalists from Versace fashion shows for writing critical reviews. Most recently, Versace's minions trashed me on "Page Six" for going on television and exhibiting insufficient reverence toward their client. Versace's death was a tragedy. But the IPO-inspired image campaign that followed was a farce.

Michael Gross
MANHATTAN

Partied Out

I AM WRITING TO YOU ON BEHALF OF MYSELF and the Asian community regarding the article "The Asia Society," by David Bahr [December 8]. I was really disappointed to see that a respectable magazine such as yours would allow one of your writers to promote false Asian stereotypes based upon the comments of two or three intoxicated individuals. I would think that *New York* would be a little more sensitive than to generalize about races through the comments of several idiotic people.

David Rhee
STATEN ISLAND

The editors respond: The ridiculous comment made by an inebriated outsider at the Asian party in our "Saturday Night" issue was clearly offered not as a statement of fact by *New York Magazine* but to drive home one of the reasons this kind of event exists: to give Asians a chance to party in an atmosphere where the women among them won't be hit on by drunken white guys who find them "exotic."

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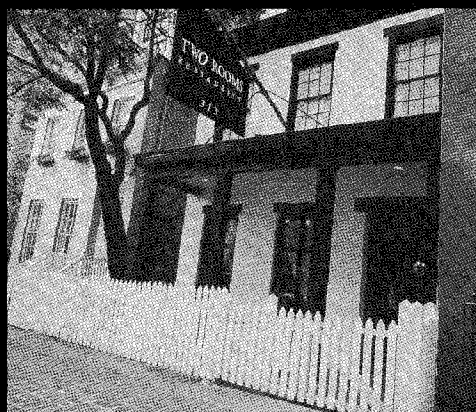
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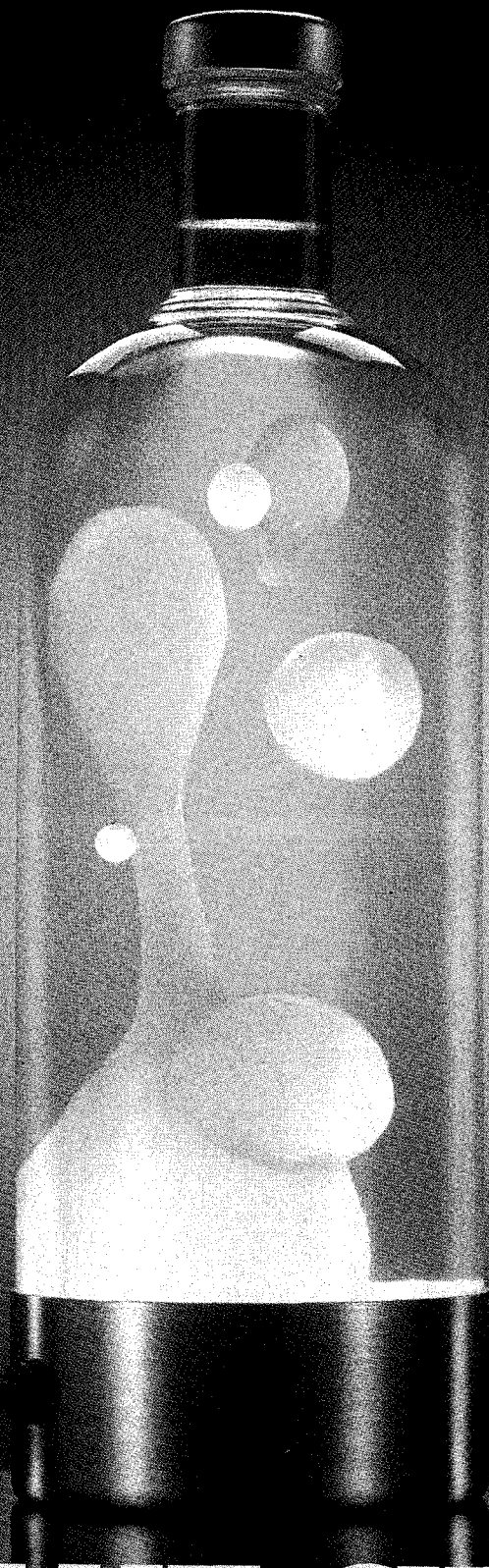
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INTELLIGENCER

NEW MUSEUM: YES, BUT IS IT ART?

Recent reports may have linked **Madonna**, **Spike Lee**, and **Ricki Lake** to the New Museum building on the corner of Broadway and Prince Street, but the famous would-be tenants may have to do some extra paperwork before finishing the deal. The building, like many in SoHo, was formerly a factory zoned for commercial use only. When the developer, BPM Associates, Ltd., began eyeing the structure as prime residential space, it applied to the Department of City Planning and received a zoning variance. The catch, however, is that the new zoning allows for occupancy solely by *artists*, who must be certified by the Department of Cultural Affairs. While actors and musicians are usually not classified as artists by the department, Madonna's duties as songwriter and album producer,

and Lee's work as screenwriter and director, could persuade the board. "But I can't think how Ricki would pull it off," a DCA spokesman admitted. Other hopeful tenants seem even less likely to make the cut than those performing artists. Sources close to the building report that a number of Wall Streeters and doctors have also been looking at the apartments. According to the DCA

WACHNER'S CAREY-HOME ROMANCE

The nation's top-ranked female executive—Warnaco's **Linda Wachner**—is seriously dating former New York governor **Hugh Carey**. They're now an established power couple, complete with power-parenting rites: Wachner witnessed Hugh's son **Paul Carey**'s swearing-in as a Securities and Exchange commissioner in D.C. last month. The former governor's penchant for wealthy women—he dated **Anne Ford Uzielli** before marrying Chicago millionairess **Evangeline Gouletas**—was well documented before **Neal Travis** spied him having dinner with Wachner at '21' last summer. Wachner's taking things one day at a time. "He's a terrific person to have in your life," she says. She'll be spending Christmas in Aspen, while "he's got thirteen kids to keep company . . . but there's still New Year's."

spokesman, such business types would most likely not qualify for certification, "unless they were actively pursuing an art form in the public domain. Hobbies aren't enough." BPM Associates did not return calls.

DONALD'S SUITE; DEBBIE'S TREAT

WHAT A HOOT: Why was *The View*'s youngest correspondent, **Debbie Matenopoulos**, celebrating her 23rd birthday at Hooters? As 70 of her pals know, she originally sent out invitations for a Planet Hollywood bash. But the club canceled at the last minute, after refusing Matenopoulos's request that her payment be donated to charity. "The bottom line," says a club source, "is that she just did not want to pay for a party." She insists that "they approached me to have a party," adding, "I could have really broken down into tears" when the deal fell apart. Instead, she just changed her venue. "Hooters's logo says, 'Delightfully tacky yet unrefined,' and I said,



Linda Wachner:
Politically supported



Ricki Lake:
The art of conversation

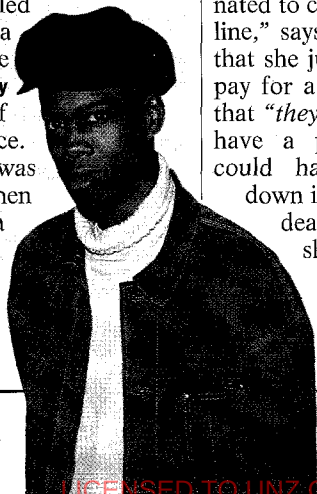
"It's calling my name," she says, laughing. But *View* co-stars **Joy Behar** and **Star Jones** didn't make the party. "They looked at me like I was crazy: 'Girl, I can't go into Hooters!' I said, 'Don't you get it? That's the joke,'" says Matenopoulos. Instead, they joined her after-party at Life later that night.

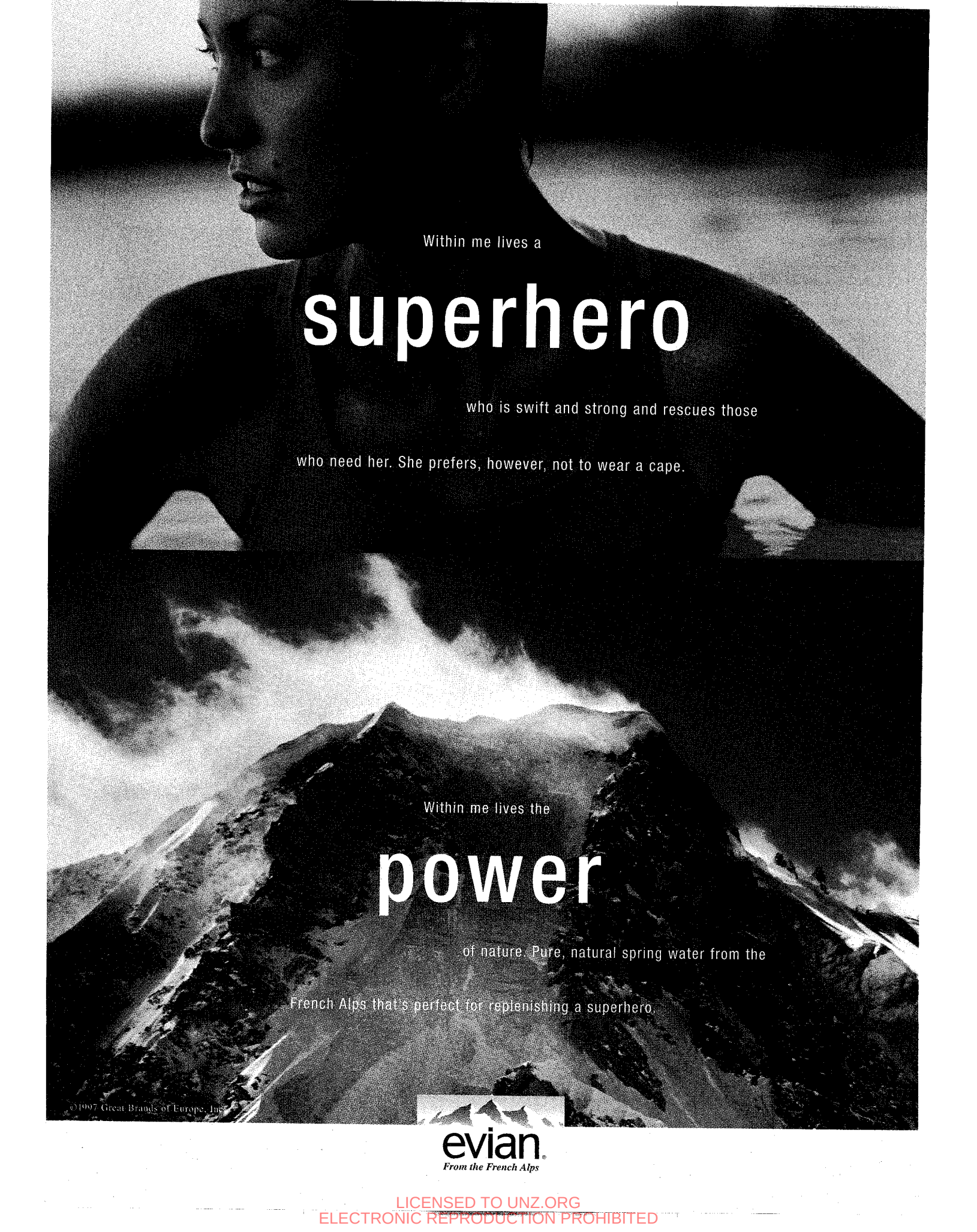
GRAND HOTEL: So, you thought **Donald Trump** was finally through with the Plaza? Not quite. The developer recently sold his majority holdings, but he is still a partner in the legendary hotel, and according to one Plaza insider, he is backing a plan to build twelve new suites on top of the landmark building.

Additional reporting by Kate Coyne.

CHRIS ROCK LANDS 60 MINUTES OF FAME

Forget about that proverbial rock and a hard place. **Chris Rock** recently got caught between two even stronger forces: CBS's **Mike Wallace** and ABC's **Chris Wallace**. Rock had agreed to do *PrimeTime Live* with Chris (Mike's son) when a *60 Minutes* producer called, prompting Rock to switch channels. The booking should have been good news for Mike, who normally works with that producer. But network sources say that Mike was so eager *not* to steal his son's story that he called Rock's publicists himself to say he'd had a change of heart. Rock still preferred the *60 Minutes* spot, however, so **Ed Bradley** took over the story. "This kind of stuff happens all the time," says Chris Wallace. "The only thing that was different here was that Rock had committed to us . . . and then he pulled back." Mike Wallace, through a spokesman, refused to comment. "I think once my father understood that it was something I was doing, he didn't want to do it," explains Chris.





Within me lives a

superhero

who is swift and strong and rescues those

who need her. She prefers, however, not to wear a cape.

Within me lives the

power

of nature. Pure, natural spring water from the

French Alps that's perfect for replenishing a superhero.

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evian.
From the French Alps

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SECRETS & LIES

Insider trading has become business as usual on Wall Street.

AT BANKERS TRUST, Alan Stricoff was an in-house cop, an assistant vice-president for compliance in charge of, among other things, insuring that nobody in the firm indulged in insider trading. But according to civil charges brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission, Stricoff himself was arranging insider trades.

The Feds maintain that after learning that ITT, a Bankers Trust client, was planning to make a tender offer for Caesars World, Stricoff tipped his brother and others to purchase call options on Caesars stock. When the offer was announced, the stock soared, yielding the cabal profits of \$458,200.

Stricoff could feel good about one thing: He wasn't the only compliance officer on the wrong side of the law that week in November. So was Marisa Baridis, who worked in the legal department at Morgan Stanley and pleaded guilty in federal court to accepting \$40,000 for passing along tips to friends at another brokerage firm.

Though the coincidence of two such cases is unusual, the crimes involved are most definitely not. Insider trading, the financial maneuver that nearly defined the greed-is-good legacy of the eighties, is more pervasive

than ever. One of the main reasons is that corporate takeovers are, once again, all the rage—"We're living through another era of empire-building," as one Wall Street analyst describes it. It's precisely this kind of activity—in which share prices can suddenly jump when merger-and-acquisition deals are made public—that feeds insider trading. One hedge-fund trader opines: "I'd say that in at least three quarters of the takeovers, there's a price run-up in the days preceding the announcement, before anyone's supposed to know anything. That's information leaking out; that's all it is. What's illegal, what's smart—it gets pretty hard to tell the difference."

This time around, it's not just the major players like Ivan Boesky and Michael Milken who find themselves in trouble. The trading patterns of everyone

from partners to back-office clerks are being scrutinized and, with increasing frequency, referred for civil and criminal charges. Even complete outsiders may be skirting the lines of legality when they make trades based on rumors and gossip from Internet chat groups. At

(continued on page 16)



DATEBOOK

Right-Wing-Nut-Job 1998 Calendar

● Remember those two tiny bombs that recently went off on 57th Street? Many believe they were timed to significant events in the calendar of the lunatic fringe. So for a safe 1998, take extra care on the following anniversaries:

1/15: Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.

4/19: Battles of Lexington and Concord; Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Waco massacre; Oklahoma City bombing.

4/20: Adolf Hitler's birthday.

8/21-22: Randy Weaver's son and wife killed at Ruby Ridge, Ida.

11/9: Kristallnacht; "The Day of the Martyrs" in *The Turner Diaries*.

12/1: National AIDS Day.

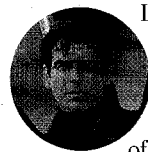
12/8: Robert Matthews, founder of the Order, killed by police in Whidbey Island, Wash.

12/15: Ratification of the Bill of Rights.

12/24: Founding of the Ku Klux Klan.

C A M E O

Bond, No Traitor



Let's face it, James Bond wouldn't be half the spy he is if he didn't have the best damn personal shopper in the world. The projectile fountain pen, the shoe-heel tracking device, the dart-shooting cigarette—these, as much as his spirit of derring-do and his aura of smoldering danger, were the ammunition of his ever-dawning victories over the forces of evil. So now that he's back, infuriating the traditionalists with his official Bond BMW, Omega, and martini shaker, let's pause to recall: The spy who loved you was also the man who invented the art of product placement. *This Armageddon-averting maneuver was brought to you by the letter Q.*

Trader continued from page 15

the end of the 1997 fiscal year, the SEC had 350 cases pending, more than double the number it was pursuing a decade ago. "They're [examining] fairly small-scale stuff now that they never would've looked twice at before," says Roy Smith, a finance professor at NYU.

Wall Street is trying to police itself. The New York Stock Exchange has implemented a program called Stock Watch that tracks employee investments at companies involved in takeovers. Anything that looks suspicious is referred to the SEC. And at some investment houses, bankers and traders are permitted to own shares only in mutual funds, not individual stocks or bonds. Analysts are often barred from buying securities in the industries they track. And at nearly every firm, the slightest activity in an employee's personal account attracts the attention of compliance officers. "An office buddy of mine bought a bunch of penny stocks, and it happened that there was a deal on [one] within two days," says a trader. "Just because of the timing it looked suspicious, and so compliance is on the phone asking her about a few hundred bucks she made."

Complicating matters for investors and regulators alike is the absence of laws dealing expressly with insider trading. To prosecute cases, the government has long relied on broad interpretations of fraud laws, asserting that inside information was fraudulently "misappropriated." After serious legal challenge, the tactic was finally validated last summer, in the landmark case *United States v. O'Hagan*. Meanwhile, defendants can still insist that they came by their information legally, by overhearing conversations in elevators or restaurants. "We hear that a lot," says Thomas Newkirk of the SEC.

Despite the progress made by the SEC, and the ramifications of the O'Hagan ruling, critics maintain that better-defined insider-trading laws are the only solution. "It's one thing for the law to be ambiguous," says Robert Daines, a law professor at NYU. "It's quite another for it to be ambiguous and lead to prison sentences."

RICHARD BIERCK

POLITICS

Bubbe of Guyana

Expats cheer as a Jewish grandmother is elected back home.

IN A TYPICALLY THIRD WORLD incongruity of new tech and no tech, the December 15 election returns from Guyana were piped in via the Internet and then projected onto a yellow-stained bedsheet at the Soca Paradise at Francis Lewis Boulevard and Jamaica Avenue, Queens. When the news flashed on the sheet that the Berbice region was going big for the incumbent People's Progressive Party (PPP) and its 77-year-old candidate, Janet Jagan, a cheer echoed through the restaurant's Day-Glo-painted caverns. Jagan, the erstwhile Janet Rosenberg of Chicago, Illinois, is the widow of Guyana's longtime patriarch, the noted Marxist dentist Cheddi Jagan.

The trend was clear: Guyana, a small, hot country on South America's Atlantic coast populated by the descendants of African slaves and East Indian indentured servants brought by the British to work in the sugar fields—and known primarily as the site of the Jonestown mass suicide—would soon have the world's only freely elected white, Jewish, former-Communist grandmother head of state.

"A great victory!" exclaimed the owner of a Liberty Avenue spice mahal in Richmond Hill, once an Irish neighborhood, now the heart of Queens's Indo-Guyanese community, where busy markets feature river fish like gilbaca, pakeo, and the bizarre, gray-gilled hassa. Several hundred ebullient East Indians at the Soca Paradise seconded the sentiment. No one at the club had voted in the election or, in many cases, set foot in the



At the Soca Paradise nightclub in Queens, Guyanese New Yorkers watch the election returns from back home. Below, victorious candidate Janet Jagan.

country of their birth in years. But the PPP, for decades the "Indian" party—as opposed to the largely black People's National Congress—was their party, forever.

Like the millions of immigrants living in New York, the Guyanese here lead a double life, molded by peculiar political and social histories. Racially speaking, the history of the Guyanese, as many as 200,000 of whom live in Brooklyn and Queens (the population of the country itself is barely 800,000), has always been peculiar. Now, with the election of Jagan, it's almost surreal.

"I am happy for Janet; she stood by Cheddi," says a high-school language teacher who has lived in the U.S. for fourteen years. "But Guyana has broken my heart." He ticked off the events that had him at the Soca Paradise rather than lolling by the mighty Demerara River, where he was born. It is a

chronology known to all Guyanese: the pernicious colonial legacy; the idealism of the pan-racial, anti-British, left-leaning movement of the fifties

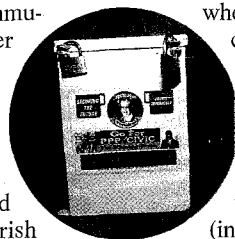
(in which the Jagans were prominent); the role of the CIA in the riots between blacks and Indians during the sixties; the rise of the autocratic, Afro-Guyanese Forbes Burnham, whose eccentric 21-year rule turned a lush, viable land into the second-poorest in the Western Hemisphere. According to Indo-Guyanese, it was Burnham's racial politics—on a

whim he banned chickpeas, an Indian staple—that led to the huge "brain drain" that created communities like Richmond Hill.

The racial divide has followed the Guyanese to the outer boroughs. "They're not happy tonight on Church and Nostrand," gloated one man at the Soca Paradise, referring to a main intersection of Brooklyn's Afro-Guyanese community, where they listen to reggae rather than the Hindu hip-hop called chutney. "They're in Queens; we're here," said one black Guyanese man in a package-mailing shop in Flatbush. "How long is Janet Jagan going to live? She's 77! What will they do then?" shouted an Afro-Guyanese man at Sybil's restaurant (motto: SERVANT TO THE HUNGRY). "How can they say it's democracy when everyone just vote their race? Indo-Guyanese outnumber Afro-Guyanese now, so they will always win. They can all relax themselves."

One thing Guyanese New Yorkers are in accord about: Even if things get better, nobody's moving back. "We're working on the American Dream," said one hip-looking real-estate agent at the Soca Paradise. "Many of us have done well here." Asked if he thought the Guyanese would one day transcend racial tribalism, the man nodded. He's currently establishing a "beachhead" on Long Island, selling suburban lots to Guyanese, both blacks and Indians, in Elmont and Valley Stream. "That'll do it," he said.

MARK JACOBSON



West Side Gory

The year of darkness on 72nd Street.

SURE, WOJTEK NALAWAJKO heard the screaming. Standing at his station inside 20 West 72nd Street on Thanksgiving Day, the doorman couldn't help noticing the commotion as the Cat in the Hat swerved off its appointed parade route. But he didn't bother investigating. "You couldn't see anything," the walrus-mustached doorman says with a shrug. "Maybe I'm just getting used to this. It doesn't bother me too much."

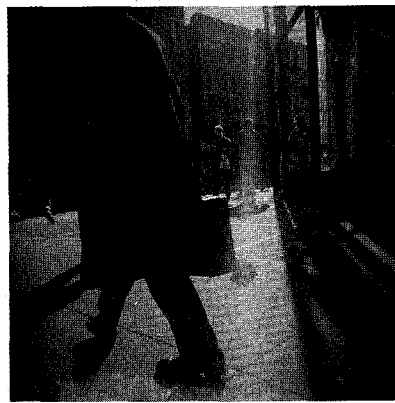
He's not a callous person by nature; he's just been on West 72nd Street for too long. And so, like its other residents and workers, he's found himself in close proximity to a vastly disproportionate number of the city's weirdest and goriest stories.

Especially this year, the street has become a veritable Via Dolorosa of tabloid holy sites. Starting at the park and heading west, one passes the home of young Daphne Abdela, one of the so-

called Central Park Killers (115 Central Park West, at 72nd); the ATM that Jonathan Levin's killers used to withdraw money from his account (northwest corner of 72nd and Columbus); and the home of the late Nadia Frey, the dominatrix who was shot to death in July (245 West 72nd).

And that's just in the past year. Before that, the street saw the first U.S. auto fatality (1899, in front of the Dakota), John Lennon's assassination (1980, same spot), the attempted assassination of mobster Frank Costello (1957, at the Majestic), and the ill-fated pickup (1973, at the site of the current All State Cafe) and murder (across the street) that inspired *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*.

"I don't think there's anything mystical about it," says Joe Valentino, the community-affairs officer for the 20th



Little street of horrors: Falling lamppost, killers' cash machine, a dead dominatrix.

Precinct. He points to more practical causes for the street's odd luck, like the wide diversity of its businesses and residents. Whatever the reasons, 72nd Street's secret history hasn't driven anyone away. Apartment prices are up (the average is \$350,000); even Krispy Kreme has arrived. Along with truck noise, high rents, and overpriced salad bars, the street's grim legacy is considered just another aspect of city life to be weathered. "I don't believe in curses," says Branimir Culo, a doorman. "Unless something bad happens." DAVID BROWNE

MARKETING

The Great American Smoke-In

IT WAS A HARD INVITATION TO TURN DOWN. THE Sugar Hill Gang would be performing; so would the godfather of soul himself, James Brown. The open bar ran from ten till three. And the whole thing was free.

But despite the atmosphere of carefree fun, the recent Bartenders Ball—which attracted an estimated 3,500 bartenders, waitresses, and busboys to the Hammerstein Ballroom—was work, not play.

Hosted by R.J. Reynolds in twenty cities, the bash is part of a massive marketing campaign the company is undertaking in the wake of the tobacco industry's recent legal setbacks. Now that the Clinton administration (fresh from its victory against Reynolds's nicotine-pushing dromedary frontman) has gone after cigarette machines in restaurants and bars, the company has been using the balls to deputize the barfolk as an unofficial sales force.

"In the bar program, we provide them with a couple of cartons a week for their personal consumption," says Reynolds spokesman Richard

L. Williams. "If a customer is going to bum a cigarette, obviously we want them to be given a Camel. If someone is noncommittal about what brand they want to buy, we want the bartenders to offer them a Camel."



James Brown, singer at the Bartenders Ball.

No attempt was made to hide the party's agenda. Spaceships festooned with Reynolds brands hung from the ceiling. There were even huge blow-ups of the warning labels that tobacco companies are legally required to display on cigarette packs. (Displaying them at promotional parties is strictly optional.) And of course, the place was smoking: Packs of Camels were being doled out with a generous hand.

"Basically," Williams explains, "it's an opportunity to give something back to the bars and bar staff we work with all year."

That message wasn't lost on one attendee. "They want me to push their cigarettes to my customers," shouted Donovan LaFond, who tends bar at 2A in the East Village, "and who knows, maybe I will. James Brown, free drinks. This is a pretty good party." RICHARD REGEN

NICE JEWISH BOY SEEKS HOT-BLOODED JEWISH GIRL FOR LOVE IN COLDER CLIMES PART IX

● Jay Ramras, the Alaskan restaurateur scouring New York for a Jewish bride willing to relocate to Fairbanks, has been busy mending his broken heart with late nights at Elaine's and Balthazar. But Manhattan's hardest-working bachelor is planning to bounce back in 1998. His New Year's resolutions:

● Think about moving entire bride-finding operation to Minneapolis, "where the women are already climatized."

● Decide more quickly which prospects should be asked for second and third dates and which should be politely rebuffed. Jay suspects some contenders are interested only in a fancy meal and the novelty of dining with an Alaskan. One woman, whom he took to Clementine, sent back her salmon, then devoured lamb chops and baked Alaska, and ended by announcing she'd never consider living anywhere but New York or Israel.

● Focus on "transplants"—i.e., nonnative New Yorkers like the flight attendant from California he recently took out for mahimahi. "We seem to have more in common," says Jay, "plus they will leave easier."

● On the non-dating front: Meet Rudy Giuliani, whom, strangely, Jay equates with Mayor Norman Rice of Seattle, a.k.a. "Mayor Nice." "I like Rudy," says Jay. "He would make a great mayor of Alaska."

RAT CITY

PERIODIC DISPATCHES FROM
THE WAR ON VERMIN

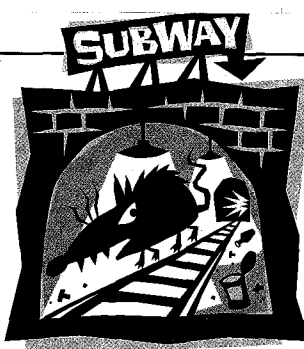
Tunnel Vision

JAMES VALETTI IS FOND OF REFERRING to himself as the Rat King. History will record his reign as a bloody one. He is not only a New York Transit Authority track supervisor; he is a trained exterminator with a well-worn license to kill.

Today he and his crew are working in one of the most persistently rebellious corners of his fiefdom: the Broadway-Nassau A-C subway stop. This station is an exterminator's nightmare: Multiple subway lines mean rats come from all directions, and the

presence of a concession stand means there's plenty to munch on. Not that they need much. "A rat can eat newspaper and survive," Valetti explains.

Valetti represents only one piece of the TA's three-pronged extermination system. The first is structured to coordinate with the mayor's anti-rat blitzkrieg: Every time the health department designates a new fifteen-square-block area for intensive rat elimination, the TA steps up its efforts on those tracks as well. The second prong is the regular cycle of baiting and poisoning, which is done track by track, station by station, and handled by independent contractors. The third prong is the acute-crisis-management end of the operation: When enough riders call up to complain about



rats, an in-house troubleshooter is dispatched to the scene. That's where His Highness comes into the picture.

To achieve his ghastly ends, he has brought a large helping of "Vengeance"—bonbons of poison-laced peanut butter wrapped in paper. He tosses one onto the track and quickly a large rat hoists it and trots away. "You just signed your death warrant, my friend," Valetti

says. Within minutes, the smell entices twenty or so rats out of the hollow track under which they live. Some play soccer with the poison, while others gluttonously chomp into it.

Fred Winters, a spokesperson for the Department of Health, says it's too soon to gauge the success of this tripartite attack on vermin. "But we're committed to this plan for at least two years," he adds. Workers in the underground arm of the operation, however, claim that that its effects are already visible. "That's some of my handiwork," says Valetti, pointing to a headless rat body, one of many strewn along the tracks. "Three days after eating the poison, they get wobbly, and sometimes the train cuts them in half." He's beaming. He can't help it. KATE AURTHUR

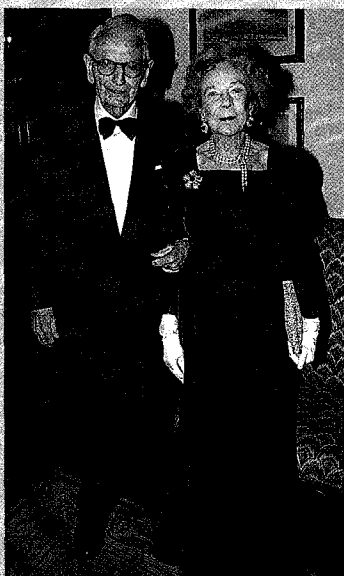
THE SCENE

Pool Party

Text by Vanessa Grigoriadis

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

'WE'RE OPENING UP OUR front yard for the neighbors," says Happy Rockefeller, casually referring to the 860 acres that surround her seven-mansion compound in Tarrytown. Opening up the front yard but closing down the swimming pool, that is, over which a vast platform has been built to accommodate the Friends of the Rockefeller State Preserve, some of whom proudly bear the names of New York's best-preserved families. "It's our duty to carry on our families' grand tradition," explains Patty Hearst, flanked by fellow traditionalists Theodore Roosevelt III and Tricia Nixon Cox. "Part of that history, of course, is public service—a fact not lost on the elected officials on hand. "Soon, New York'll do well by you, m'boy," says George Pataki, saluting Nelson Rockefeller Jr. Over at the deep end, where two event planners conferred, talk was also of preservation. "I wouldn't dream of doing an event without an oxygen tank," one said. "You never know who'll keel over."



At the Governor's Parks and Preservation Awards, Laurance Rockefeller and Brooke Astor celebrate the Rockefellers' new donation of parkland to the state.



At the Lotos Club for Cheri Kaufman's birthday, Carly Simon, Kaufman, and Beverly Sills.



Jonathan Kaplan and Natalie Portman celebrate the opening of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, to benefit the Shoah Foundation.



At the Whitney Museum, Conan O'Brien and Walt Frazier attending New York Magazine's second annual New York Awards.



At the Perry Ellis benefit for the Naked Angels theater company, Josh Hamilton, Nicole Burdette, and Ethan Hawke after a reading of *Chelsea Walls*.



Barry Diller and Diane Von Furstenberg celebrating the opening of *Scoop* on Madison Avenue, hosted by *Interview* and Krug champagne.

GOTHAMSTYLE

EDITED BY DANY LEVY



From the Hip

Joseph who? The name on the lips of fashion hipsters is now landing on increasingly many celebrity hips. Maybe the hordes of young starlets recently spotted in Joseph's low-riding Jockey pants don't prove much, but the conversion of such usually fashion-averse entertainers as Billy Bob Thornton and Ellen DeGeneres sure does. And so does the scene at the designer's odd pants-only boutiques, where New Yorkers are practically lining up for the chance to wriggle in to the garments, which start at \$229—and look an awful lot like the city's million other low-riders. Even better, Club Monaco's come out with a darn good knockoff.

KRIS MCNEIL

BODY TYPE

Silent Night

● A DO NOT DISTURB sign might keep the housekeeper from barging in at 8 A.M., but it won't deaden the roar of diesel buses or the clamor of the couple arguing (or, worse, reconciling) in the room next door. So the Waldorf Astoria and the New York Hilton have been experimenting with Sleep-Tight rooms, equipped with white-noise machines, relaxation CDs, black-out drapes, ear plugs, eye masks, extra-supportive mattresses, and a modified mini-bar stocked with milk and caffeine-free beverages. Though the rooms don't cost any more than standard accommodations, some other hoteliers claim they're a rip-off. "We New Yorkers are accustomed to a certain level of noise," one hospitality-industry executive points out. "Why pay all that money for a nice room if you're just going to seal yourself off from the world?"

KATE COYNE

What Goes a Round

Could the corner, of all things, have become hopelessly square? *Gattaca*, filmed at Frank

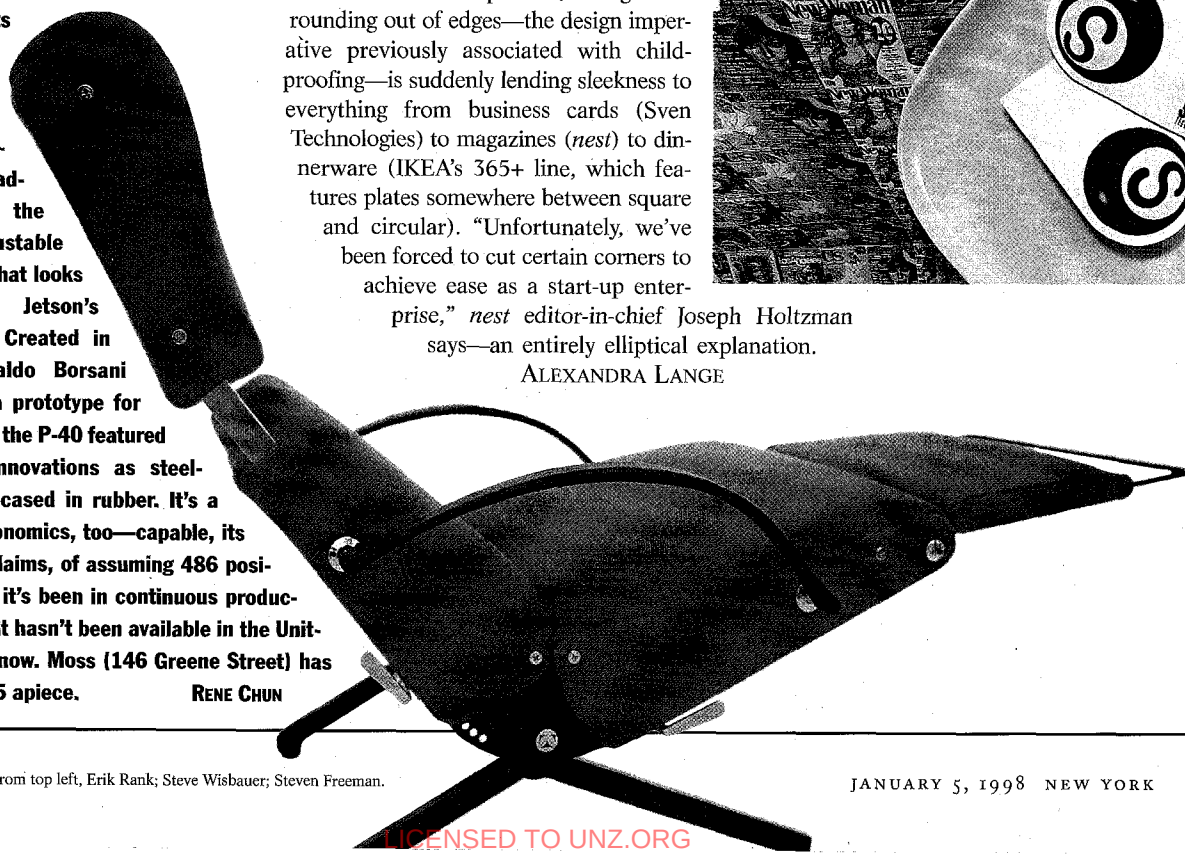
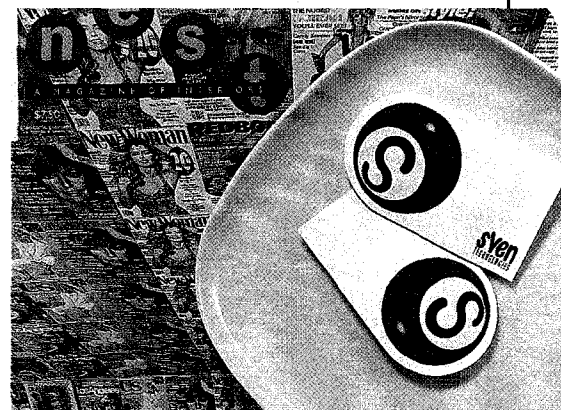
Lloyd Wright's barrel-vaulted Marin County Civic Center, achieved its futuristic look with saucer-shaped workstations and lozengelike rooms. Back here in the present, the general rounding out of edges—the design imperative previously associated with child-proofing—is suddenly lending sleekness to everything from business cards (Sven Technologies) to magazines (*nest*) to dinnerware (IKEA's 365+ line, which features plates somewhere between square and circular). "Unfortunately, we've been forced to cut certain corners to achieve ease as a start-up enterprise," *nest* editor-in-chief Joseph Holtzman says—an entirely elliptical explanation.

ALEXANDRA LANGE

The Hot Seat

Now that popularity has stripped the leather club chair of its members-only appeal, the search is on for a new living-room icon. A leading contender: the P-40, an adjustable chaise longue that looks like George Jetson's BarcaLounge. Created in 1954 by Osvaldo Borsani (and used as a prototype for airplane seats), the P-40 featured such design innovations as steel-spring arms encased in rubber. It's a paragon of ergonomics, too—capable, its manufacturer claims, of assuming 486 positions. Although it's been in continuous production in Europe, it hasn't been available in the United States until now. Moss (146 Greene Street) has them for \$3,975 apiece.

RENE CHUN



Album of the Year

Martha meeting Busta, Ellen finding her inner Winkler, and practically everyone talking to Larry King: Some '97 moments to remember . . . with alarm.

THE FIRST OF 1997'S STRIKING images was odd and macabre: all those unworn Nikes peeking out from under shiny purple blankets. Rancho Santa Fe's benign cultists' stab at brand loyalty into the next millennium was but one of the year's major news events that could never be described as undocumented or underanalyzed. At the risk of piling on—but with the promise of a fresh view—here are a few others:

- ELLEN CAME OUT, AND NO KNOWN DISASTERS resulted (the Baptist boycott of Disney notwithstanding): The stock market is up, and El Niño is behaving himself. And it was a far, far more important moment for the community than, say, Gay Day at Disney World. Plus, she had to do it for the sake of the scripts: Those dating scenarios with single menfolk Ellen hoped to impress had achieved awkwardness maximus.

As with any major life development, first you cry—in Ellen's case, in an interview with ABC's Diane Sawyer. Then you start making public appearances with your significant other—Anne Heche, a delicate dewdrop version of the doppelgänger-girlfriend. But the outing seems to have jolted Ellen's system into sexo-drive: With her penchant for fifties bowlingwear and her predilection for pawing and groping her lover in public, Ellen DeGeneres is running the risk of evolving into some kind of macho cartoon character, a blonde Fonz for the nineties.

- A BUZZ SAW TO THE NATIONAL PSYCHE, 1997: You've probably seen the Infiniti commercial in which a Danny DeVito-type guy receives divorce papers at the front door of his garish mansion. "Half?

She gets half?" he wails. "I'll give her half!"—and begins a *War of the Roses*-like tear through the place with chainsaw and blowtorch, hacking the piano, the couch, the pool table in half. When he gets to the garage and the sight of his true innamorata, a shiny, erotic Infiniti Q45, he stops. Now we are bathed in Barry Manilow's "I Can't Smile Without You." "On second thought," he says, "maybe we can work something out."

The spot, according to TBWA Chiat/Day, the agency that created it, has been "a tremendous success and has already won a couple of awards." Fine. But the irony here is that while the nineties Zeitgeist is supposedly about asceticism, atoning for the vulgar appetites of the eighties, the reality is that this \$48,000 vehicle is now being sold with a show of ostentatious wealth and brute-force aggression. Back when the car was introduced, in the age of late-eighties excess, it was promoted through spots that were Zen-like, soft, and quiet, with calming natural sounds of running water, and shots of rocks and trees. Whose eighties is it, anyway?

- WE KNOW WE LIVE IN STRANGE, LONGING-for-kitchen-ritual times when the presence of Martha Stewart confers hipness on MTV.

It must be because both their first names end in *a*—why else pair Ms. Stewart with Busta Rhymes as celeb presenters at the MTV Video Music Awards? Race and gender evaporated, and actually, they made a lovely couple: Martha, the Valkyrie of the Viking Range, the Schwarzenegger of home-made stollen, standing in a shiny pantsuit, demurely getting kissed by . . . Mista Busta, who chose for the evening



a long, sleeveless, Asian-inspired red-patterned tunic and matching flocked-silk shoes, his dreadlocked hair gathered in gravity-defying bunches set off by white earrings. A New York rapper famous for his liquid legs and the song "Woo-Ha! (Got You All in Check)," Busta was strong enough for Martha yet sensitive enough to add palazzo pants to his ensemble. The pairing certainly boosted awareness of him. Because while it remained clear that Martha *never* does anything slipshod or slapdash, Busta, this time, was the one who really made an effort.

- THE NANNY TRIAL, AND GRIEF OVER THE death of baby Matthew Eappen, opened all sorts of emotional floodgates and was used to legitimize every backlash theory about working mothers devised since the fifties. I thought it was still the fifties, perhaps, when I read the *New York Times's* WHEN WAAA TURNS TO WHY: MOM AND DAD BOTH WORK? WHAT DO WE TELL THE CHILDREN? (Note how they were careful to include the dad.) Even though the piece posits that 63 percent of all women with children under 18 work, it also suggests that for middle-class women with spouses, work can be an "illicit pleasure," an "infidelity." Perhaps we should take another look at that pin money we're making by firing up the Selectrics.



• THE PRINCESS-BRIDE DREAM DIED HARD this year. The idea of being swept away on your wedding day into a fantasyland



where you exist to be admired and gazed upon (remember to wave back!) still resonates powerfully in the culture.

Perhaps this was why some of the millions of Diana's American mourners were so inordinately bereaved. And even though the initial searing images of the princess were of death—the unbearably sad card to MUMMY, the acres of flowers—they were soon superseded by images of her life. While Diana was alive, the concept of being a modern princess—mother, traveler, clotheshorse, she had everything but the prince—offered a new archetype. And still does.

So much so that when New Yorker Nicole Contos was left at the altar (having quit her job as a kindergarten teacher she spent five months planning the dream-perfect wedding) and then,

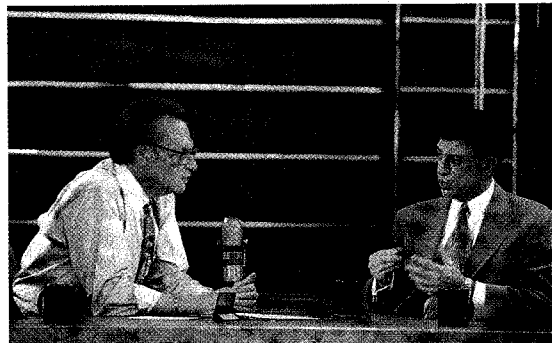
her prince missing, parted as a single bride, she became a media darling. But the entire series of events—focusing all of her energy on the big day, wanting his bow-tie to be perfect—augured a disturbing cultural undertow: *The Rules: The Dark Side*.

• IN A YEAR WHEN SOME HIGH-PROFILE marriages took hits, when bad things happened to biters and cheaters, many of the victims and victimizers sought absolution from TV's most senior groom, Larry King. How, given his own morality-impaired history, has Larry King become such a TV monument? Perhaps because his physical presentation is the opposite of monumental: collapse. He's falling. Instead of cocking an ear, he rounds a shoulder to show signs of being a good listener.

But it's not only the flaccid shoulders. It's the outsize eyewear too—even the glasses are curved, like wind-

shields. They supply a tele-papal image, suggesting order, ritual, the washing away of sin. King's Tiny Toon mini-tornado hair completes the trinity, weirdly evoking the calm days of TV yore: It's as if Andy of Mayberry's Aunt Bea had moved her gray beehive side to side.

Perhaps that's why King was the interviewer of choice in 1997 for those desperate for an uncritical hearing. At a



time when there is no morality, only TV, he offers us a poignant combination: gangster-sharpie Nathan Detroit as kindly *bubbe*.



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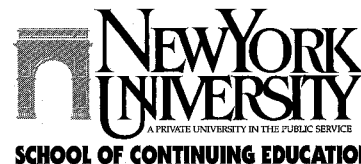
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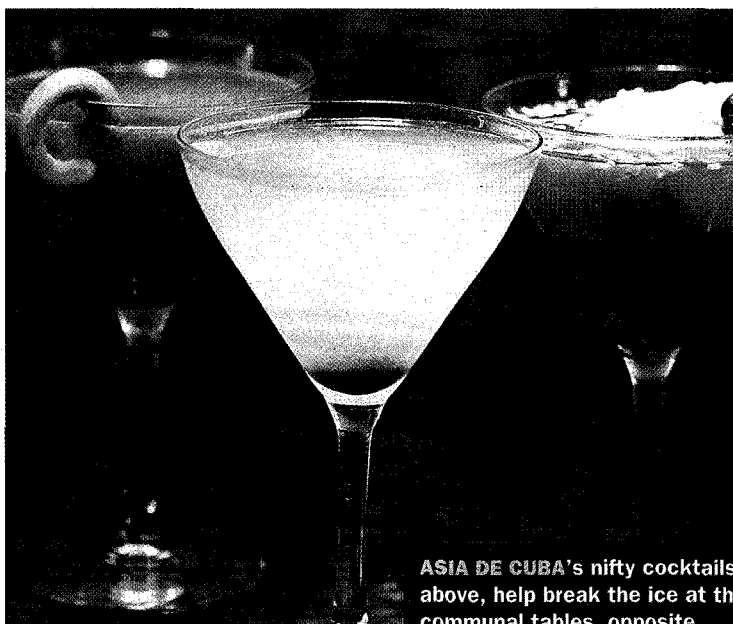
Just when it seemed like the restaurant madness of the eighties was safely in remission, everyone and his dentist wants to play the game again. And one bistro simply isn't enough. Finding the gems in a rubble of cubic zirconia is my job. When friends call for advice, here's what I say.

I want to go to a spot that's so hot I can't get a table.

It all depends on what crowd you want to be shunned by: Supermodels, Displaced Royals, Book-of-the-Month Club Lions, Grammy Bait, Bonus-Baby Jocks, Hollywood Heavyweights, Drag Queens. There are layers upon layers of heat in this town. Incredibly, **ELAINE'S** still gets visiting filmbos and is now into its third generation of the fourth estate. **LE CIRQUE** is a conundrum. One day, it's a Junior League outing in Cincinnati. The next, hello, Hollywood Squares. But don't even hope to see the fire in Sirio's eyes before February. At **NOBU**, cinema- and music-world sluggers have first dibs. So unless De Niro or Drew Nieporent owes you, forget it. Downtown boomers' brats hang out at **RIALTO**.

Subterranean insinuations of the Casbah, kooky drinks, and stylized Moroccan dishes bring scene-seekers to **CHEZ ES SAADA**, hidden in an old schoolhouse on the Lower East Side.

The gossip vixen Cassandra, my well-placed nocturnal spy, insists the crowd at **ASIA DE CUBA** is already slightly shabby. But I don't care. It's sexy



ASIA DE CUBA's nifty cocktails, above, help break the ice at the communal tables, opposite.

P H O T O G R A P H S B Y K E N N E T H C H E N

(pleasure)

At Spartina, iridescent taffeta and golden lighting add new swank to the room, but the Oloroso mushrooms take the spotlight.

and dim and cosmetic in that Starckly gorgeous room. After a mai tai and a half, I couldn't tell Joan Rivers from Dennis Rodman anyway. And I love the tricked-up cooking. People who have nothing better to debate are of two minds about **BALTHAZAR**. Some say torrid. Some say torpor. Even so, Keith McNally's Parisian homage is still a tough ticket. Lunch brings out SoHo's sachems en masse. But hey, *breakfast* is so far still sedate and civilized. Even you, even *I*, will likely rate a spot to nurse a pot of Earl Grey or a nice mocha latte, with pain au chocolat from the Balthazar bakery.

No matter how much you deny it, I bet you have secret places.

My secret places have nothing to do with restaurants. Perhaps it's naïve and even boring, but when it comes to food, I always tell. Here are my off-duty hangouts: When Daddy Warbucks pays, I butter him up at **LE BERNARDIN** or **NOBU**. In Upper West Side just-we-two moments after a flick, my mate and I stop by **SHUN LEE CAFE**, where we shun the dim sum in favor of an authentic stir-fry. Tripe or oxtails, perhaps. At **CAFE FIORELLO**, we can point to what we want from the savory vegetable-antipasti display—a no-yawn supper before a night of brain-taxing Kultur at Lincoln Center. Often we join friends at **SPARTINA**, most recently to see how chef Stephen Kalt, my sometime tasting crony, has been inspired by his latest week in Spain. When I first spotted him in the kitchen at Le Cirque, it was his cool good

looks I noticed. But now I value his thin grilled pizzas and lusty flavoring as much as his camaraderie.

Velvet, iridescent taffeta, and golden lighting add new swank and intimacy to the room, but it's the Oloroso-perfumed mushrooms and brandade-stuffed trout in a basquaise sauce that takes the spotlight. Crisp heads-on shrimp ride atop Valencian rice and aioli, the same garlicky ooze that flavors the shrimp pancakes. The tasty new orange cake made with olive oil comes straight from the kitchen of an Iberian granny. I tease Kalt because the *a* is shorted out in the neon sign at the end of the bar that reads PLE SURE, but

as my guest observes, "There's always something missing in pleasure."

What are New York's best chefs buzzing about?

Verjus, wild grouse, Bugs Bunny (popping up on every menu these days), cotton candy, and **UNION PACIFIC**. In his last post, at the late Dava, Rocco DiSpirito's cooking was wildly inventive. Some found it simply weird. Wonderfully weird, I thought. Now, in a dramatic otherworldly rain-forest setting by Larry Bogdanow Partners, DiSpirito steps up a level closer to Valhalla. Sweet, small scallops nuzzle in their shells next to blobs of sea

urchin, damp with an essence of tomato, mustard oil, mirin, and black mustard seed that rocket straight to the brain. "Toss them down like shooters if you wish," the smooth pro of a waiter suggests. Thick seared foie gras fillet gets mounted on sheer slivers of green papaya, tart, sweet, and nutty all at once—mingling textures of velvet and pistachio crunch. Do these sound like the delusions of a madman? Halibut braised in goose fat with ginger jus and shallot cracklings. Black bass crusted in crushed sunflower seeds on celeriac purée with corn and sherry-poached figs. Diver scallops in a foie gras emulsion. Dare I whisper "Genius"?



Simple, traditional Greek fare is an art form at MOLYVOS.

Who gets your vote for star chef of the year?

Jean-Georges Vongerichten. The rail-thin, baby-faced Alsatian seemed to be cooking in a fugue state for a while. But the Trump challenge woke him up. Maybe he's cloned himself. Seeding Vong around the world, he keeps Jo Jo jumping and has quickly choreographed a triumph at **JEAN GEORGES** in its minimalist glass box inside the Donald's towering new bed-and-breakfast. By late fall, the dining-room crew had mastered a few old-fangled serving tricks and abandoned the rest. Imagine. There must be some fledgling pastry elf who does nothing but sliver vanilla beans thin as string. I could do without the petals and the cookie-crumb-and-candied-almond dust on the edge of the plate. And let's definitely 86 the ridiculous marshmallows (or roast them over the votive candle) and toss out the confit of celery in the ethereal strawberry water.

But after the Fabergé checkerboard of tuna and hamachi with its masterly acid kick, and delicately sautéed frog's legs redolent of garlic and lemon, these seem like testy little quibbles. I won't even make fun of the marshmallows anymore. Not after luscious turbot delivered "rarish," as if the kitchen and I were two minds with one thought. Not after the discovery of what a millet pancake can mean. Not after the astonishment of apple-cake confit. From the incandescence of the night, I'd never dreamed the chef was not in the kitchen till I walked out back to say "Bravo."

What if I'm too disorganized to book a month in advance?

There's still hope. A sudden no-show may clear a table for you if you happen to be close by, sipping champagne and batting your eyelashes or waving a Ben Franklin (let the vibes dictate which). At Jean Georges, for one, it's a shade easier to infiltrate lunch, and



Stephen Kalt left Le Cirque to build SPARTINA in his own image.

it's a bargain too—\$45 for three courses plus desserts, compared with \$78 for dinner. Shockingly, that may be less than lunch à la carte at **NOUGATINE**—Vongerichten's adjacent bar-café, relaxed but proper with stunning bouquets in hues of flame, orange, and burgundy. A friend and I have picked up a last-minute reservation there at noon, but we'd be just as happy perched at the bar (where we spy restaurant critic John Mariani up to his ears in foie gras).

There's nothing casual about Nougatine's crab salad with cumin crisps or the tuna tartare with chive oil or steamed black bass with roasted beets and caviar in beet juice. Everything zings with flavors that soothe and bite and warm and mystify. Don't be fooled by the seeming simplicity of white figs with port and pistachio ice cream; it's divine, as is kiwi reborn in a tart with mandarin-milk marmalade and lemon ice cream.

How can we amuse Junior without torturing ourselves?

When the Petit Prince breaks into a squall at **SOFIA FABULOUS GRILL**, don't give him a

grappa-soaked napkin to teethe on. Let the nanny take him out for a walk so you can finish your pizza and schmooze with the young mommies who fill the back room at lunch. Watching the skaters—or actually joining in—can keep even jaded Manhattan rug rats amused at **AMERICAN FESTIVAL CAFE**, where the children's menu features chicken fingers with fries, grilled American-cheese sandwiches, and ice-cream cones with sprinkles. On a recent Saturday at **HONMURA AN**, where I fall under the spell of the heavenly homemade buckwheat soba and udon noodles, I am astonished to see so many toddlers out on the town, all so well behaved. Is it SoHo or is it Zen? One child naps in his stroller. Another makes a trampoline of the banquette for more than two hours, gurgling happily and nibbling one grain of rice at a time. As for me, I love my noodles cold with uni and grated daikon, or hot with button mushrooms called nameko that bob in a powerful broth. If you don't travel with your own sensei, let one of the remarkably down-to-earth servers show you the way to grace.

Sunday is definitely family night at the **LOBSTER CLUB**, where there is always meat loaf or crispy rock shrimp in a paper cone for kids of all ages. Owner Anne Rosenzweig wisely instructs her staff to take a child's order quickly, then dispatches carrot and celery sticks to keep everybody busy. The kitchen gamely adlibs burgers or a mozzarella pizza and even pasta any way you ask, including naked. Meanwhile, adults get to sip sensational squash soup or enjoy a perfectly al dente risotto with mussels and arugula pesto. Your heir is invited to tour the kitchen, where he or she gets a cookie so you can enjoy dessert and the last sip of some treasure from one of the town's savviest wine lists. Values at every price level are packed on just two pages: an elegant Languedoc from Clavel, an exceptional Viognier from Iron Horse, a seriously good Chianti Classico from Castello di Ama, and one-of-a-kind wines that partner-husband Andy Freedman totes home on his biweekly bi-coastal commutes.

An adored grandchild also seems to have made softies of the Maccioni clan. At **OSTERIA DEL CIRCO**, they now have clown desserts and booster seats. To amuse grown-up gourmands: suckling pig on Saturdays.

Dare I ask you to suggest a theme restaurant?

Young sports nuts love and deserve the **OFFICIAL ALL STAR CAFE**, though having survived it once, I know the sensory bombardment is too taxing for me. A joke-sprouting waiter, fire-throwing magicians, and the shy balloon sculptor will vie for your youngster's attention at **COMEDY NATION**. And they don't get nasty even if you torture them, as my grown-up delinquent did, topping their jokes, spoiling their trick. Across the room, a hassle of



Chef of the year Vongerichten keeps **JEAN GEORGES** consistently excellent.

moppets somersault happily on the cushions of a giant sofa, egged on by the magician.

The Dagwood—an eight-inch tower of first-rate Black Forest ham, pastrami, smoked turkey, and three cheeses with mayonnaise and mesclun on seven-grain bread topped with twin cherry peppers—could easily feed the Brady Bunch. Yes, you read that right: *mesclun*. Rob Miketa, the chef whose old-fashioned American home cooking made Hot Tomato so endearing, has signed on to do food that will attract grown-ups, too. I've been searching for years to find the cherry pie of my childhood. Comedy Nation's wonderfully crumbly tart might do

if it weren't served blazing-hot with what looks like freshly dispensed shaving cream.

What's brand-new in the neighborhood?

Having scored with fin and claw at his **BLUE WATER GRILL**, Stephen Hanson still has a few fish up his sleeve. Modestly, minus the whistles and clatter of some high-profile competitors, Hanson next week opens **ATLANTIC**—sushi bar up front, raw bar out back, a few Asian insinuations in between. It's the sixth outpost in his growing mid-list empire.

If 500 Hell's Angels gunned their bikes up and down the aisles of the **WALL STREET KITCHEN & BAR**, it couldn't be noisier than it is every night when hordes of young traders colonize the place. To really

appreciate chef Tom Valenti's smart flavor sensibility, ride the elevator to his new padded sanctuary upstairs. At **THE WALL STREET CLUB**, affluent lunchers can revel in the robust good food that lured Valenti fans to Alison on Dominick and Casabel: oyster pan roast in a light curried chowder and yellowfin tuna with white-bean puree.

Where do you send friends for pasta?

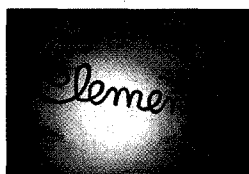
FRESCO BY SCOTTO (for unfailing warmth and delicious excess), **I TRULLI** (for wonderful Apulian savories from the roasting oven), **BAR PITT** (Firenze-on-Sixth), and **TRATTORIA DELL'ARTE** (for its unmatched antipasti bar and crackling pizzas) top my list. On a recent visit, the kitchen

at **CAMPAGNA** bristles with fresh energy, fueled perhaps by padrone Mark Strausman's new Sunday menu, celebrating Southern Italy (spaghetti and meatballs redux). Our quartet of fussy eaters is pleased with pappardelle bolognese, grilled octopus and squid in peppery wine-vinegar glaze, the white-bean-and-sausage-soup special.

The De Rosa family now spins its passionate sales pitch for Naples at **PIERINO** in TriBeCa. If you focus on the big white anchovies, pork-flavored bean soup, grilled whole squid, and remarkable pastas—strangolapreti with broccoli and black truffle, and the manfredi alla Vesuviana—you may be able to forget the forlorn room.

What's the catch of the day?

I was distracted when **AQUAGRILL** landed on Spring Street, so I only just discovered what the very gifted chef-owner, Jeremy Marshall, is dishing up: Tangy salmon tartare on potato chips. Plump crab-cake napoleon. Warm octopus salad with roasted peppers and pepper cress moistened with roasted-onion vinaigrette. When all that counts is perfect cooking, Marshall delivers. I can't remember the last time I wasn't betrayed by Manhattan clam chowder. His is perfect, as is a classic bouillabaisse and the pristinely fresh swordfish served with broccoli rabe, bacon bits, polenta, and a tang of balsamic vinegar. At times it seems that he is teetering over the edge—roasted-garlic spaetzle, wild-mushroom ragout, and Jerusalem artichokes in fresh-truffle emulsions sound like more than any poor fish can suffer. Yet that combo is a treat, too. And don't resist



Fans of chef John Schenk's cooking (like me) will gamely brave the **club-kid-and-post-deb clutter** at trendy **Clementine**.

the warm banana skillet cake. Jennifer Marshall runs the cellar, stocking wines both reasonable and rare. The place is plain-jane and noisy with a savvy crowd shelling out for shellfish. The \$66 two-story coquillage sampler seems to be an essential centerpiece at every table.

Of all that's new, where would you gladly return?

Fans of John Schenk's cooking (like me) will gamely brave the club-kid-and-post-deb clutter at **CLEMENTINE**. His lemon-saffron risotto with sea urchin in pea broth will cut the winter chill, as will venison osso bucco with potato-sage pancakes. And the iceberg-lettuce wedge in a creamy sludge of bacon-studded buttermilk dressing is like Mom's but better.

Defy Thomas Wolfe and go home again to **DROVERS TAP ROOM**, where owners David Page and Barbara Shinn flavor the good grub with nostalgic Americana like beef Stroganoff on sour-cream noodles and the chicken-sausage potpie.

Growing up Greek and making it big in America inspired the Livanos family and their partners at Oceana to create **MOLYVOS**, a sprawling midtown taverna. Rustic starters, moussaka, and stewed rabbit are reason enough to re-

turn. **MONZÙ** seems far removed from *its* inspiration, Sicily, but I loved the tangy squid and octopus, the hunky lamb shank, and the antipasto platter lavish enough to feed our foursome. Indeed, peasant stews and soups seem especially appealing as winter gets serious, so I'll go back to **TUSCAN SQUARE** again. If I'm lucky, the handsome pottery bowls I coveted last fall might be on sale.

Turkey's cosmic mushes of eggplant, tomato, and chickpea and pita bread that's impossible to stop eating are what lure West Siders back to the warm and welcoming **PASHA**.

That sublime foie gras-massaged chicken at **MOOMBA** haunts me. And I can't wait to taste what a chef who rubs duck liver on chicken will do next. The downtown pop-arazzi and uptown boomers' babies loitering here for the moment will undoubtedly migrate with the next hot vibe, but that's good news for serious food lovers.

Though I'm exhilarated by the masterworks of Jean Georges and Union Pacific, and grudgingly seduced by the flavorful poetics of Bouley, the banquette I'd most like to own is at **BALTHAZAR**, a fantastical French bistro on Spring Street that looks like it's been



Start with dessert—anything chocolate—at PAYARD.

there forever. I don't give a Calvin if it draws an A crowd or a B-minus. How nice to find end-of-the-day loaves of bread in the outer vestibule bagged for the taking. Heading home with a similar gift loaf from Bouley, I try to persuade my mate to make a de-

tour to Balthazar so I can sneak in and switch breads.

Where are the eternal verities?

You may find a few frozen in amber or, even better, slathered with chicken fat at the **SECOND AVENUE DELI**. The sidewalk outside is studded with stars celebrating the royalty of the Yiddish theater. A jarring poster on the door offers a reward in the murder of owner Abe Lebewohl. But Adam Tihany's fine redesign is as sensitive as a matzoh ball. The pastrami is not what it used to be, but then, neither are we. Still, the stuffed derma deserves landmark status. Once we are into the pickles and very good chopped liver, and mesmerized by the dazzling makeup and inky pompadour of our inimitable waitress, Diane, it seems like old times.

Shun the socialites and stay for the food at the downtown CLEMENTINE.



Inside the vast, echoing cavern of **KATZ'S DELICATESSEN**, the historic magnetism of the frank and beans (served up here since 1888) escapes us, but the salami immortalized by the famous **SEND A SALAMI TO YOUR BOY IN THE ARMY** is garlicky and as good a way to die as any.

I'll eat anything as long as it's chocolate.

Don't hope to compete with the headbands that lunch. Come late to **PAYARD** with an ally. Waste precious time if you must with a croque monsieur or even the wonderful potato tourte (imagine a French chef assigned to come

up with a knish). Better yet, go directly to dessert.

Ask for the chocolate tasting, not one but five cocoa-beanie babies. The frosted mousse with striped candy antlers is really you, darling. And the midnight-dark comma—the endearingly eager-to-please François Payard calls it a tear drop—is the pâtissier's marvelous brownielike bow to American taste.

She favors French. He loathes it. Where to go?

If it weren't so brutally noisy, **LES HALLES**, the Gallic steakhouse, would be perfect, raffish and casual. More civilized and comfortable, with proper but relaxed service and the urbane sophistication you

find in contemporary French kitchens: **THE LENOX ROOM**. She'll appreciate the lobster spring roll with tamarind bite against shellfish sweetness and top-notch tuna with roast-tomato hash. He'll go for the lamb shank and won't be put out by attitude.

CASCABEL, with its non-judgmental bonhomie, knowledgeable service, and oenophilic grace, can also save this marriage. Chef Sam Hazen's dazzling experiments with flavor and texture are worldly but never eccentric. Tell the Francophobe it's plain old lox and pass him gravlax with chickpea blini and caviar, followed by grilled lamb chops of roasted loin. Seared sea scallops with

polenta croutons will suit her fine. Ditto, potato-crustured salmon with steamed leeks in a red-wine sauce. Yes, the molten chocolate cake is a cliché, but it's a glorious one.

How can I score a table at Le Cirque?

It helps if you've got clout in Brunei or a faintly ersatz title (never mind that your palace has been sacked, as long as you escaped with a tiara or two). Try forging an alliance with a known pet of Sirio Maccioni, Le Cirque's storied owner. Sirio *never* abandons a friend of the house, although a few regulars who used to anchor his royal banquettes in olden times now commune over high-priced macaroni-and-cheese at Harry What's-His-Name's. Since my querulous pan of Le Cirque 2000 last spring, a half-dozen trusted *gourmandlich* pals have been reporting that the kitchen's early hit-and-miss has bubbled into brilliance. Well, with one heady sniff and a taste of exquisite scallops almost invisible under wanton shards of fresh white truffle, I have to agree. The diver-harvested critters—the chef's gift to our table—are quickly caramelized, cooked to near-melting perfection, then buried in a blizzard of truffle. The marriage of earth and sea is celestial. Alas, nothing else hits this high—not stone-crab salad with grapefruit and mundane hard-boiled egg, not the mucky lobster risotto, not overcooked bass in too-tough lettuce, not insipid fillets of John Dory (though vegetables tossed in for the ride are quite wonderful). Even one of my guests, an unabashed knight of the Maccioni round table, is disappointed. "Forget the food," he shrugs. "It's about the faces, this crowd, Sirio and the sons doing their dance, the excitement." True enough.

At eleven, boldface types and typos are still arriving: Cindy Adams and Joey in one corner, Mary Tyler Moore in the other, a few steps from the kitchen. (Now, that's a new zone of chic!) Also peppering

The scene's the thing at the sublime **MOOMBA**.





The chopped salad at **TAPIKA** will hold you at least until intermission.

and some servers seem simple-minded, but I'll get over that if I ever get past the door again.

I'm in the mood for meat.

Go to **THE PALM** for classic steakhouse sirloin, to **MORTON'S OF CHICAGO** for a hulking double porterhouse, and to **MALONEY & PORCELLI** for its haunch of pig wrapped in a crackle of skin. Kobe beef is the latest extravagance at **RESTAURANT 222**. **INAGIKU** in the Waldorf lets you sear your own primal beef on limestone, with chunks of bean curd for the yin and yang of it. But once again, the best steak of the year is thick, sweetly charred prime rib fiorentina at **FRESCO**. Alfred Portale's rack of lamb at the **GOTHAM BAR AND GRILL** makes most lamb elsewhere seem anemic. But the rack Erik Blauberg serves with a vegetable tart at '**21**' comes mighty close.

If you want to wallow in meat, turn up the green GO button on your table at **CHUR-RASCARIA PLATAFORMA**, and prepare for a wild Brazilian dance of waiters toting speared meats hot off the rotisserie. One by one, they hit your table, slice off a chunk or three—skirt steak, flank, short ribs, a ribbon of loin—and that's just beef, for starters. Eventually, you're offered lamb, chicken hearts, pork, sausage, even fish. For just \$27, you can pig out till the place closes.

I'm in love with a dancing fool.

Want to please an Arthur Murray grad? Nothing but the **RAINBOW ROOM** will do. Let the Ginger-and-Fred illusion include caviar and vintage lobster thermidor. Your aging hippie might prefer boogie

nights at **DECADE**. Stick to the simpler concepts, like the country salad or the risotto. To show off your sensuous mambo, book a seviche and a Chilean-salmon dinner at **BISTRO LATINO**.

Who does Gotham's best crab cake?

ESTIATORIO MILOS molds a cake that is virtually pure crab, naked on the plate. But **SEAGRILL**'s traditional round, with its indulgence of fat crab lumps, is equally good, and the floor show on ice is more fun than a fireplace. If a passionate Greek re-created an Aegean village inside a skyscraper, it would look like Milos: Here a stone well, there an ancient ruin. Even at night, fish are trundled in from the airport, tossed on the ice, and priced by the pound. Dinner at Milos and lunch at Seagrill set me back \$300. From the satisfied grunts of the Greek shipping moguls across the room, I guess business must be good.

Where shall I take my ravenous brood after *The Lion King*?

Pay lip service to family values with spaghetti-and-meatball excess at **CARMINE'S** or the barbeque sampling platter at **VIRGIL'S**. **SOUL CAFÉ** is a hike west on 42nd Street but worth it for ribs, chicken, and live jazz (some nights and Sunday brunch). Pasta and stuffed cheese crisps are the drill at gently priced **FRICO**. Honor thy pizza at **JOHN'S PIZZERIA** in the soaring nave of what used to be the Gospel Tabernacle Church.

How about a new turn-on for an incurable romantic?

THE PARK, with its aura of Venetian decadence and its rococo cooking, feels just right

the red room: A. E. Hotchner, Jill St. John with Robert Wagner, Diane Von Furstenberg—oh, no need to go on. Servers trot smartly, while eagle-eyed Papa, two of his sons, and vigilant floor-walkers oversee all. I especially like Mr. Las Vegas in the white prom jacket.

Sirio always sweetens up his critics with a triumphal tidal wave of desserts. Tonight the gesture backfires. Too much sugar in roasted figs and mandarins. Too much alcohol in the roasted pineapple. Too much air and not enough cocoa bean in the chocolate soufflé. But all the carping is stilled by the arrival of an extraordinary chocolate tree, its winter-bared branches tipped with berries and dripping sweet ruffles and butter-cookie leaves.

Is it true David Bouley is running a soup kitchen?

In haute pursuit of the Soup Nazi and the Soup Nutsy, here comes the Soup Nietzsche. You may not be able to snare

a spot in the dining room of the **BOULEY BAKERY**, but you can stop by for a carryout cup of his split-pea soup. Skip the very ordinary bread. This café is just a diversion while Bouley waits for his planned Empire of Boulemania to emerge: a grand restaurant, a Viennese hash house, his greenmarket-grocery, and the Academy Bouley.

The chef (one of *People's* "50 Most Beautiful") has been insufferably prickly and rude of late, so I'm hardly in the mood to love dinner. But I have no choice. Everyone at the table is dazed and disarmed by every precious little morsel, the unlikely pairings of fruit and fish, the preemie lamb chops, the albino rice, the seeds, the spikes, the sprouts, the devilish shenanigans. Does he do it by remote control? There Bouley sits, with his back to the dining room, having dinner with a friend even as we eat. Some of the staff have yet to be trained,



At the Second Avenue Deli, the pastrami is not what it used to be, but the delicious stuffed derma deserves landmark status.

You can happily live on bread alone at **BALTHAZAR**. (Be sure to book early.)



for an assignation, even if it's with your own mate. And it's even sexier at a corner table in the bar, where a trio evokes the thirties and forties.

What well-known haunts are worth rediscovering?

Close to Carnegie Hall and a fast hike to the theater, **TAPIKA** thrills with southwestern fantasy and spicy fare. Just as convenient for culturati is **RED EYE GRILL**, with sparkling smoked fish on the seafood bar and a menu that has something for any appetite. **CHRISTER'S**, with its winning Scandinavian ways, is ideal for pretheater dinner. Maybe you had to grow up with the old legends and the original faces at **'21'** to find it as sexy as I do. Chef Erik Blauberg

has tamed some of his highfalutin fuss in deference to the saloon memories, but not enough. Still, risottos are rich and delicious, and the splendid rack of lamb and grilled veal chop stand on quality alone.

I sent friends with Off Broadway plans on the Lower East Side to **FIRST** for dinner. Their raves sent me back, and I loved it, too.

A visit to **VERBENA** is like stepping into a cocoon of almost southern gentility where the staff is proudly professional and the tea is brewed. In the three years since I was last here, Diane Forley has refined her signature dishes—the crunchy oxtail terrine and the popular beer-braised ribs with roast-

wild striped bass with truffled spaetzle in a primal cabbage stew, and exceptional desserts—slow-baked apple tart, coffee-ice-cream cake with hazelnut praline, and pear upside-down cake with ginger ice cream.

Last fall, Bobby Flay moved back into the kitchen at **BOLO** with new ideas for his bold and better-than-Spanish Iberianesque cocina. Piquillo peppers stuffed with salmon tartare is one result.

Can squid be too crisp? Impossible, and Flay's is pleasantly salty from anchovy-and-parsley pesto. I insist on chopped salad for the table and my favorite lamb shank (impossible to resist), though the rabbit on sweet-potato risotto is wonderful, too, as is mint-

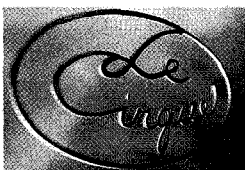
brushed tuna from the grill with tangerine-pomegranate-almond relish.

MATCH UPTOWN is a must for me now that Gary Robbins is building his spicy Pan-Asian edible towers there. Giant prawns, seared foie gras, diver scallops—each item gets a touch of fruit and chili heat. Almost hidden behind yellowfin tuna are pilings of Shanghai pickled turnip in a puddle of red-pepper miso. Ginger-soy-glazed salmon comes with sake-steamed cockles and Chinese sausage. Desserts are exceptional, too. My favorite: the signature mango sundae with chili-macadamia praline.

THE GRILL ROOM, Larry Forgione's outpost for American regional classics, is good news for workaholics around Battery Park.

I'm in town for just one night. I want your numero uno.

I've never been able to choose just one. If you asked for a dozen, I'd give you thirteen. **GOTHAM BAR AND GRILL**, **LE BERNARDIN**, **NOBU**, **DANIEL**, **LESPINASSE**, and **AUREOLE** are the ultimate. **PICHOLINE**, with its brand-new dress and seductive cheese service, gets better all the time. **SHUN LEE PALACE's** menu can be challengingly Chinese, stylishly Hong Kong, and very made-in-the-USA, suiting New Yorkers and old China hands alike. Until I find the great Thai canteen New York deserves, I'll settle for Thai from a French perspective at **VONG**. **JEAN GEORGES** and **BOULEY** rate pedestals, too. As for dinner tonight, let's meet at **MESA GRILL**.



To land a prized table at **Le Cirque 2000**, it helps if you've got clout in Brunei, a hot line to Sirio Maccioni, or a faintly ersatz title.

The Hot List

AMERICAN FESTIVAL CAFE
20 West 50th Street
332-7620

AQUAGRILL
210 Spring Street
274-0505

ASIA DE CUBA
Morgans Hotel,
237 Madison Avenue
726-7755

ATLANTIC
1337 Third Avenue
988-9200

AUREOLE
34 East 61st Street
319-1660

BALTHAZAR
80 Spring Street
965-1414

BAR PITTI
268 Sixth Avenue
982-3300

BISTRO LATINO
1711 Broadway
956-1000

BLUE WATER GRILL
31 Union Square West
675-9500

BOLO
23 East 22nd Street
228-2200

BOULEY BAKERY
120 West Broadway
964-2525

CAFE FIORELLO
1900 Broadway
595-5330

CAMPAGNA
24 East 21st Street
460-0900

CARMINE'S
200 West 44th Street
221-3800

CASCABEL
218 Lafayette Street
431-7300

CHEZ ES SAADA
42 East First Street
777-5617

CHRISTER'S
145 West 55th Street
974-7224

CHURRASCARIA PLATAFORMA
316 West 49th Street
245-0505

CLEMENTINE
1 Fifth Avenue
253-0003

COMEDY NATION
1626 Broadway
956-0101

DANIEL
20 East 76th Street
288-0033

DECADE
1117 First Avenue
835-5979

DROVERS TAP ROOM
9 Jones Street
627-1233

ELAINE'S
1703 Second Avenue
534-8103

ESTIATORIO MILOS
125 West 55th Street
245-7400

FIRST
87 First Avenue
674-3823

FRESCO BY SCOTTO
34 East 52nd Street
935-3434

FRICO
402 West 43rd Street
564-7272

GOTHAM BAR AND GRILL
12 East 12th Street
620-4020

THE GRILL ROOM
225 Liberty Street, World
Financial Center
945-9400

HONMURA AN
170 Mercer Street
334-5253

INAGIKU
111 East 49th Street
355-0440

I TRULLI
122 East 27th Street
481-7372

JEAN GEORGES/ NOUGATINE
Trump International,
1 Central Park West
299-3900

JOHN'S PIZZERIA
260 West 44th Street
391-7560

JO JO
160 East 64th Street
223-5656

KATZ'S DELICATESSEN
205 East Houston Street
254-2246

LE BERNARDIN
155 West 51st Street
489-1515

LE CIRQUE 2000
New York Palace Hotel,
455 Madison Avenue
303-7788

LENOX ROOM
1278 Third Avenue
772-0404

LES HALLES
411 Park Avenue South
679-4111

LESPINASSE
St. Regis Hotel,
2 East 55th Street
339-6719

LOBSTER CLUB
24 East 80th Street
249-6500

MALONEY & PORCELLI
37 East 50th Street
750-2233

MATCH UPTOWN
33 East 60th Street
906-9177

MESA GRILL
102 Fifth Avenue
807-7400

MOLYVOS
871 Seventh Avenue
582-7500

MONZÙ
142 Mercer Street
343-0333

MOOMBA
133 Seventh Avenue
989-1414

MORTON'S OF CHICAGO
551 Fifth Avenue
972-3315

NOBU
105 Hudson Street
219-0500

OFFICIAL ALL STAR CAFE
1540 Broadway
840-8326

OSTERIA DEL CIRCO
120 West 55th Street
265-3636

PALM
837 Second Avenue
687-2953

THE PARK RESTAURANT
109 East 56th Street
750-5656

PASHA
70 West 71st Street
579-8751

PAYARD PÂTISSERIE & BISTRO
1032 Lexington Avenue
717-5252

PICHOLINE
35 West 64th Street
724-8585

PIERINO
107 Reade Street
513-0610

RAINBOW ROOM
30 Rockefeller Plaza
632-5000

RED EYE GRILL
890 Seventh Avenue
541-9000

RESTAURANT 147
147 West 15th Street
929-5000

RESTAURANT 222
222 West 79th Street
799-0400

RIALTO
265 Elizabeth Street
334-7900

SEAGRILL
19 West 49th Street
332-7610

SECOND AVENUE DELI
156 Second Avenue
677-0606

SHUN LEE CAFE
43 West 65th Street
769-3888

SHUN LEE PALACE
155 East 55th Street
371-8844

SOFIA FABULOUS GRILL
29 East 61st Street
702-9898

SOUL CAFE
444 West 42nd Street
244-7685

SPARTINA
355 Greenwich Street
274-9310

TAPIKA
950 Eighth Avenue
397-3737

TRATTORIA DELL'ARTE
900 Seventh Avenue
245-9800

'21' CLUB
21 West 52nd Street
582-7200

UNION PACIFIC
111 East 22nd Street
995-8500

VERBENA
54 Irving Place
260-5454

VIRGIL'S REAL BBQ
152 West 44th Street
921-9494

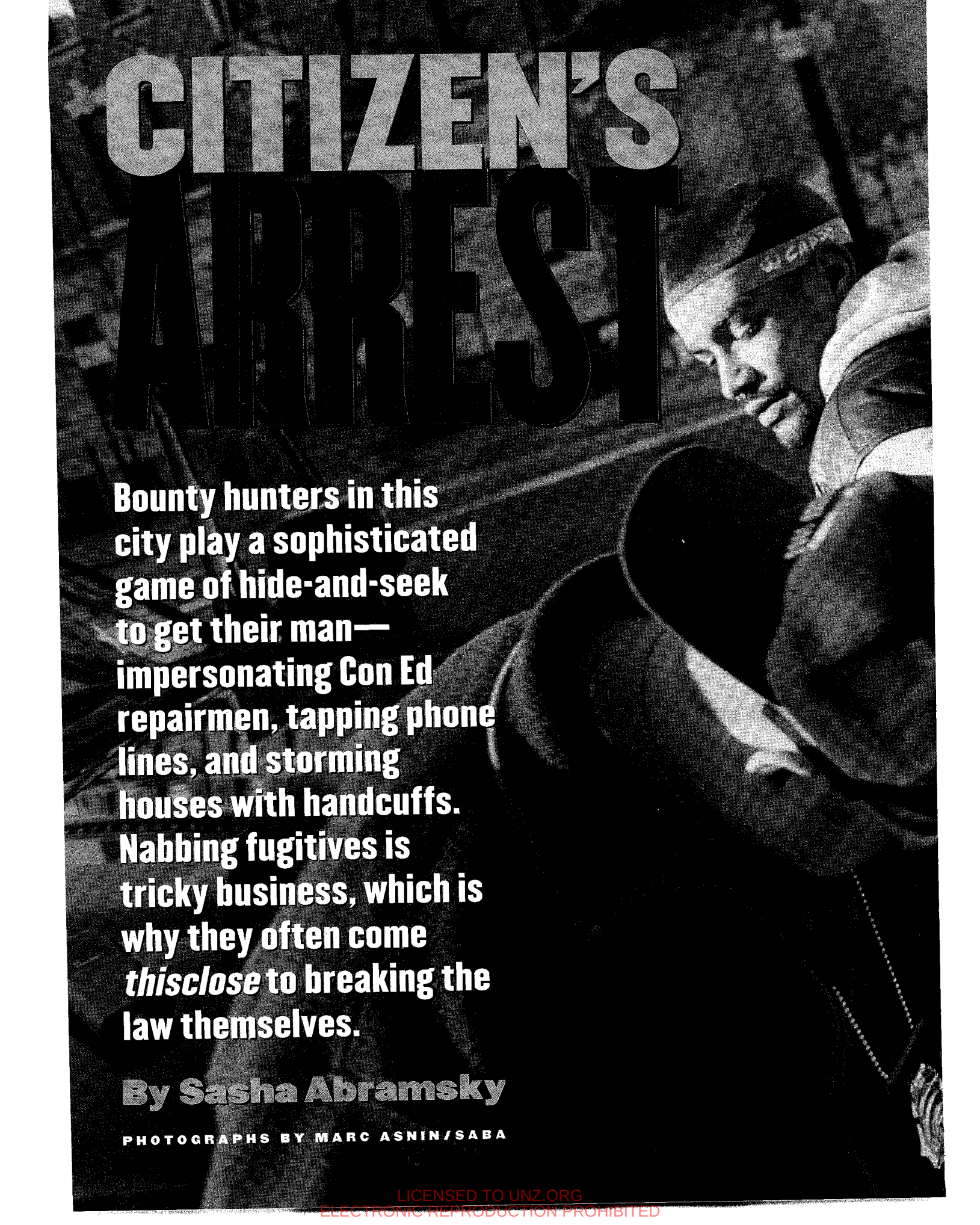
VONG
200 East 54th Street
486-9592

WALL ST. KITCHEN & BAR
70 Broad Street
797-7070



At LE CIRQUE 2000, fine food and a parade of stuffy celebrities.

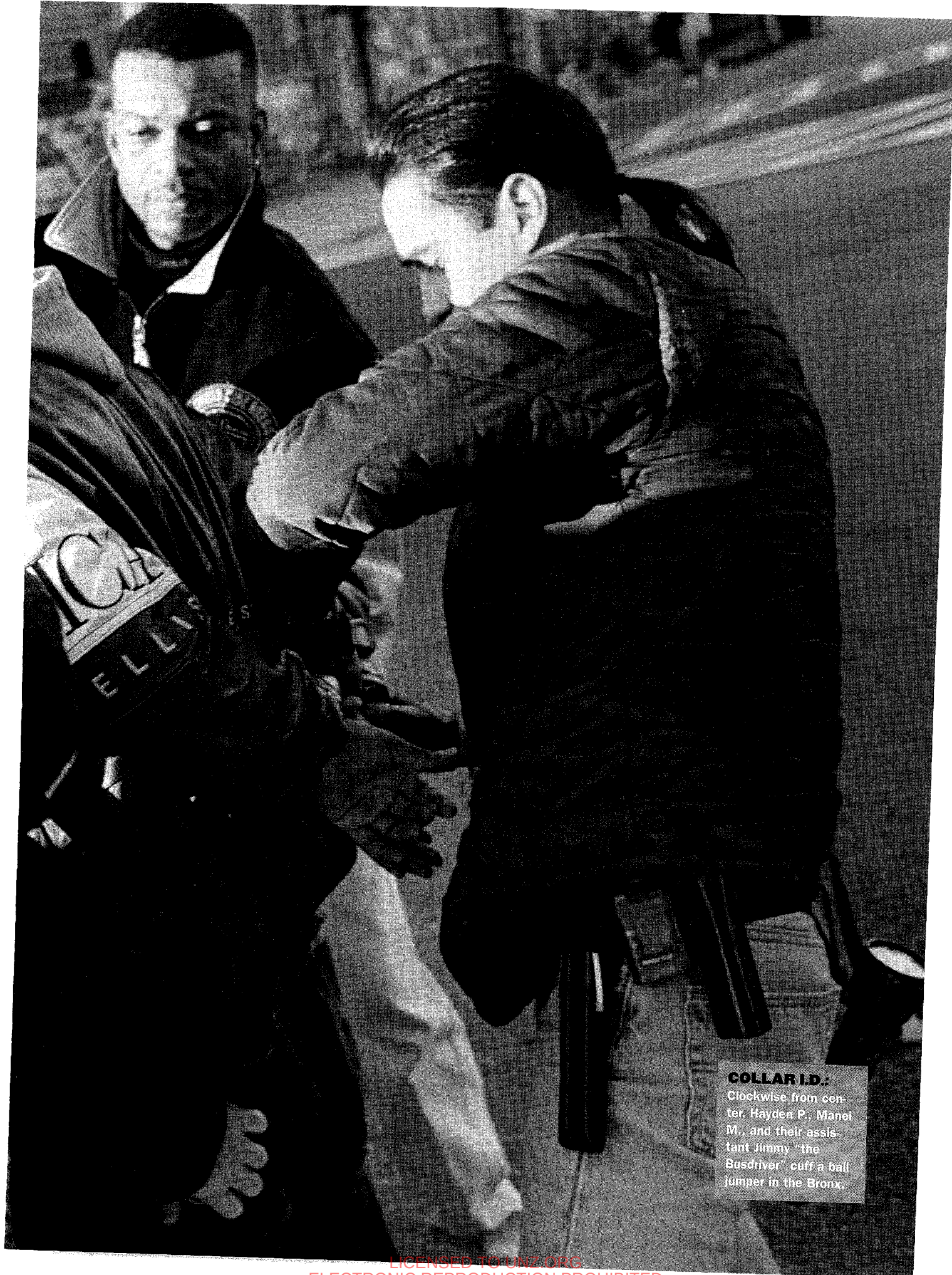
CITIZEN'S ARREST



Bounty hunters in this city play a sophisticated game of hide-and-seek to get their man—impersonating Con Ed repairmen, tapping phone lines, and storming houses with handcuffs. Nabbing fugitives is tricky business, which is why they often come *this close* to breaking the law themselves.

By Sasha Abramsky

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARC ASNIN/SABA



COLLAR I.D.:

Clockwise from center, Hayden P., Manci M., and their assistant Jimmy "the Busdriver" cuff a ball jumper in the Bronx.

IN THE CAR ON THE WAY TO LA GUARDIA AIRPORT, SEAN says he hopes his 8-month-old daughter, Nasira, won't remember this morning. A few minutes ago, two men in Con Edison coveralls stormed into their Morris Heights home in the Bronx, threw her daddy up against her crib, handcuffed him, and bundled him down the stairs into a waiting car. His father-in-law couldn't understand why the men hauling daughter Melissa's common-law husband away couldn't be slapped with kidnapping charges. "These people are illegal as hell," he'd screamed. ■ Sean is unruffled; the bogus repairmen weren't altogether unexpected. Last year, he failed to appear in a North Carolina court on a minor drug charge, and today his past caught up with him. On the way to the airport—where a flight leaving in five hours will remove him from New York for several months and cost him his recently found job at the Gap—he apologizes to his abductors for the

the behavior of his father-in-law, a Vietnam vet who had angrily bellowed at the two "cowboys" who'd descended upon his home out of nowhere and ruined everybody's morning.

GEORGE F. AND SCOTT B., TWO OF NEW YORK CITY'S MORE SUCCESSFUL bounty hunters, pulled up to a brick two-family split-level in George's dove-gray Mercury Cougar just after 7 A.M. They cased the building, which was surrounded by a six-foot-tall chain-link fence, before parking around the corner. There, they opened the trunk, grabbed blue bulletproof vests, and quickly strapped them on. Over the vests went Con Edison coveralls—orange for Scott, blue for his partner's 306-pound, six-foot-seven frame. Then came the headphones with antennae and mouthpieces, and handset radios for their chest pockets. Finally, they took out guns—a slick black 9-mm. Colt for George, a silver Smith & Wesson .45 semi-automatic for Scott—and pocketed them. Scott stamped his cigarette stub into the ground, jammed a pile of paperwork on their human target under his arm, and got back in the car. The men then drove around to the rear of the house and parked.

George lumbered over to the back fence and glanced at the colonnade of metal trash cans. One of them was pockmarked with bullet holes. "Nice neighborhood," he muttered. The ex-Marine's deep-southern drawl matched his wrestler's build; in his scary-cuddly bearishness, he resembled the psychopathic traveling salesman played by John Goodman in *Barton Fink*. Scott, shorter, compact—certainly more Con Edison-like in appearance—went around to the front. The plan was for Scott to ring the doorbell and attempt to enter the house. Only there wasn't a doorbell by the gate.

Scott's voice sputtered over George's headset: "The doors are locked. I can't even get into the driveway."

"Jump it, I guess," George answered reflexively. "There's no entrance at all back here."

"Climb it, and he's gonna wonder why Con Ed is climbing in," Scott radioed back.

They huddled briefly and decided to return to the car. At 7:29 A.M., they drove 300 feet down the road and U-turned to point the Mercury Cougar at the front door. They waited, with the engine running. Scott took out his cell phone and used the time to call the Greensboro bondsman. George chain-smoked Marlboro Lights. There was no small talk.

At 8:02 A.M., the door of the house opened, and two young women emerged. Just as they unlocked the gate, George and Scott raced the Mercury sedan up onto the sidewalk, leaping out before the women thought to close the latch behind them. "Which one is Melissa?" Scott shouted. The wide-eyed woman in jeans with long brown hair said she was.

They hustled her back inside the enclosure, shouting they had a warrant for Sean's arrest, demanding to know where he was. "Upstairs," the young woman answered, almost inaudibly. They rushed into the house, propelling her in front of them with their bodies. Hearing the commotion, an older man and woman and another young man bolted into the hallway on the ground floor.

They, too, began to shout. The intruders barked that Sean was wanted for jumping bail in North Carolina.

All seven scrambled noisily up two flights of stairs, into a small, neat bedroom. There, standing next to a crib, was a young man with a black bandanna wrapped around his head, wearing a T-shirt printed with the words RALPH LAUREN and blue pants. A baby was sitting on the bed crying, holding a bottle in her lap.

The two men in coveralls slammed the young father up against the crib made up with Disney-character sheets and cuffed his hands behind his back. Before hustling him down the staircase, they told Melissa to give him \$20 spending money for jail. As Sean was being maneuvered into the car, Melissa's sister called to him, "You need anything, just call. I'll get you anything you need." Then she turned to Scott and George. "Try not to drive over the grass as you leave," she said.

SCOTT LIVES IN ROCKLAND COUNTY, GEORGE IN CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY. But for both these men, the city streets are hunting grounds, their prey those who jump bail. Scott and George are paid by bondsmen who stand to forfeit their investment if the "skippers" are not caught.

Typically, hunters receive 10 percent of the bond for services rendered; in Sean's case, \$1,000 on a \$10,000 bond. Occasionally, a single capture can net a top hunter enough to live on for a year. Arizona hunter Bob Burton, who is now president of the National Institute of Bail Enforcement and who founded the National Association of Bail Enforcement Agents (NABEA)—the nearest thing the industry has to a union—says that in the eighties, he chased "huge, million-dollar bonds," snaring Miami cocaine barons, which means he was clearing at least \$100,000 a head. As one of New York's elite skip-tracers says, "You do it for the money, and you do it for the money. It's the bottom line."

Until recently, bounty hunting was a little-discussed vestige of frontier justice, revisited every few years in movies like *The*

SAYS ONE NEW YORK SKIP-TRACER, "You do it for the mo

Bounty Hunters, *A Fistful of Dollars*, *The Hunter*, *Blade Runner*, and *Midnight Run* but rarely scrutinized. After all, everyone benefited: The bondsman got his money back, and the service cost the taxpayer not a penny. These mercenaries were a key cog in the justice system, for without them, fewer bondsmen would risk lending out money for bail and more people would spend months sitting in increasingly overcrowded jails awaiting trial.

According to Bob Burton, 87 percent of those who jumped a bondsman-loaned bail, or some 25,000 people, were picked up by bounty hunters in 1996. "Less than two dozen complaints were issued against them," says Burton. But on the last day of August 1997, the industry suddenly had a lot to answer for. Early that morning, five men burst into a house in a suburb of Phoenix, Arizona, tied up three of the occupants, and attempted to enter the bedroom of a young couple in their twenties, Chris Foote and Spring Wright. Foote picked up a gun and began firing through the door. By the time the shoot-out had ended, Foote and Wright were dead. Later, under arrest, the bandits claimed they were bounty hunters and admitted that they were, in fact, looking for someone else.

Two weeks later, after further investigation, prosecutors announced they now believed the bounty-hunting story was just a fib, and that the five men in ski masks were burglars whose sortie had gone awry. But the news came too late for the country's bounty-hunting community. Across the United States, politicians and legal commentators began howling for regulations to control these vigilantes.

Bounty hunting is legitimized in New York by state law and at a national level by an obscure 1872 Supreme Court ruling holding the bail contract to be a unique civil affair between the bailee and the bondsman, empowering the bondsman or his employees to use *any means necessary* to return a bailee who flees. In New York, only a minority of the hunters are legally entitled to carry guns (35 percent, Bob Burton estimates, although hunters privately admit that a lot of their peers are packing weapons without permits). Says one old-timer, "This is a citizen's arrest. We're there under lawful pretexts. If somebody pulls a weapon, you can use deadly force in defense."

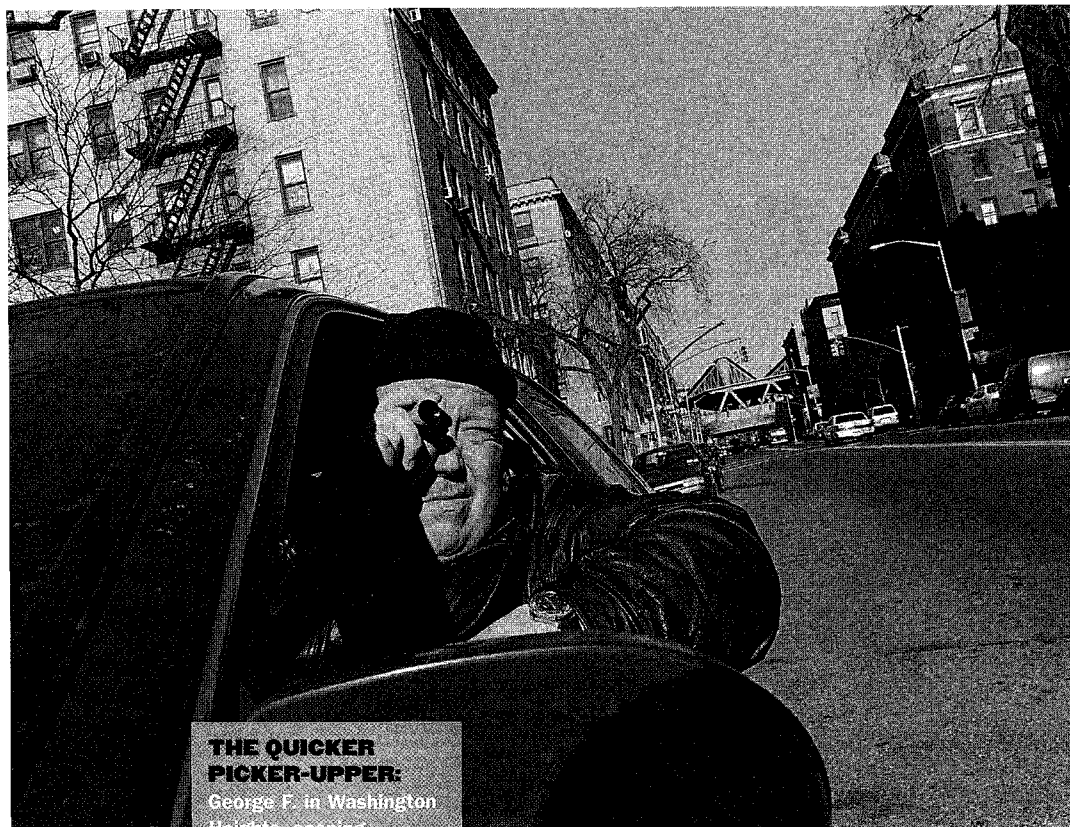
After the incident in Phoenix, State Senator James Lack ordered his staff to research the industry, with a view to introducing legislation that would require hunters to alert local police to busts. There has been talk of introducing age minimums and higher educational standards or military qualifications similar to those recently introduced into the NYPD. Hunters would also have to undergo a physical exam as well as take a written test and submit to an interview that would determine their psychological stability.

Whether or not Lack's reforms go anywhere, what seems

clear is that post-Phoenix (an event more than one hunter describes as the industry's Rodney King case), the hunters are in for a rougher ride.

THE RANKS OF NEW YORK'S BOUNTY-HUNTING COMMUNITY INCLUDE everyone from moonlighting private eyes to people who answer the phone at Dial-a-Mattress. There are ex-suits like Bob R., a middle-aged man laid off from his spokesman's job at IBM; former military personnel like Sonya S., a young woman with eight years in the army who teaches at a parochial school by day; Raymond T., a bus driver with a powerful taste for Long Island iced teas; and one man old enough to claim Social Security who is too addicted to "getting these scumbags off the street" to retire.

Stan Rivkin is described by many colleagues—with grudging respect—as a "forefather" of the city's hunters. Unlike quite a few of his peers, who prefer their beeper-toting anonymity, he is an inveterate self-promoter, a man whose antics are at least partially re-



sponsible for bounty hunting's blustery, square-jawed, camera-friendly public face.

The goateed, cigar-chomping Long Islander, now 65, began hunting in the mid-fifties, shortly after he'd finished serving in the Marines. He was working as a repo man for a New York City finance company. Paid \$25 by a bondsman for his first human catch, he was one of the only active skip-tracers on the East Coast. His West Coast counterpart was Ralph "Papa" Thorson, who worked out of Los Angeles and died in 1991.

By the seventies, Rivkin, who was raised mainly in an Orthodox Jewish orphanage in Yonkers, was being profiled in *People* magazine. CBS made a film titled *Rivkin: Bounty Hunter* that starred Ron Leibman. Rivkin used to store apprehended fugitives in his Franklin Square basement overnight. A photo of Duke, the blue Doberman who watched over Rivkin's detainees

y, and you do it for the money. It's the bottom line."

("higher-strung than your average Doberman," says Rivkin), still hangs on his living-room wall.

"I'm not a rabbi or a priest or anything like that," says Rivkin. "But I think I get through to these people more than a court of law or a counselor because I talk their shit. If you want to catch these guys, you gotta get down in the gutter with them, down and dirty." It's a point of pride that in 1988, Robert De Niro rode with Rivkin to prep for his role in *Midnight Run*. ("I rode with De Niro, too," says Bob Burton. "Ralph Thorson also went out with De Niro. *Everybody* wants to believe that it was modeled on him.")

In 1990, Rivkin had a triple bypass, and since then, he's been content to walk around with an unlit cigar jammed in his jowl. He's no longer as active as he once was; if there's going to be a chase, he hires somebody to help. Nowadays, there are plenty of hungry young hunters who welcome the chance to work with

quently, the deportee does not even realize his appeal has been denied. He finds out when Manei and Hayden kidnap him.

The captives are hustled down to Federal Plaza, where they are kept in holding cells on Varick Street; out-of-state cases are flown to the INS's main processing facility in Louisiana. Manei and his partner drive to the airport, buy the plane tickets, alert the crew that they are transporting someone who is under arrest, and fly to Baton Rouge. From the airport, Manei usually drives the deportee to a small parish jail renting out cells for \$45 a night. And there the deportees stay until the INS office in Oakdale opens for business. The paperwork is filled out, the bounty hunters claim their money, and within a few days, the hapless ex-felons are on planes back to lands they may not even know.

On the twenty-third floor of the Peninsula Hotel, at the swanky rooftop bar, Manei greets the maître d' by his first name.

They shake hands. The maître d' leads Manei to a table and walks off to fetch him a cocktail. Manei calls the bar his "office away from home." He may be contacted only through a pager number with a Long Island area code; the Peninsula is one of the places he goes to rendezvous with bondsmen.

The 31-year-old has a boyish face and shoulder-length black hair. His body is thin and wiry, and he is dressed casually, in black jeans, a T-shirt, and flashy chains. But this is the Peninsula, so he's thrown on a sport coat. Manei still manages to look like the college student who acted in Molière and Tennessee Williams plays ten years ago at Long Island's Dowling University. If he catches his man early in the morning and gets down to Federal Plaza before the INS offices open, he can sometimes be found sitting in the McDonald's on Broadway across from the Federal Building, wearing his bulletproof vest and reading Gogol or Dostoevski while

Hayden, his tall, baritone-voiced partner, sits outside at the steering wheel of his gold 1997 Chrysler Sebring, glancing occasionally through the rearview mirror at the cuffed prisoner in the backseat.

Manei fell out with his mentor, Stan Rivkin, in the early nineties. He isn't well liked by the NABEA crowd, either. Somewhat more cerebral than your average hunter, he's been talking recently about setting up a more exclusive organization to rival Bob Burton's. Many of those in NABEA, he feels, are small-timers. "Out of 10,000 people," he exaggerates contemptuously, "you're lucky if there are 10 people who are real bounty hunters, who make a living out of it 24 hours a day."

Describing his work, the hunter quotes Sun Tzu and Machiavelli. In *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu writes—according to Manei's paraphrase—"If you can win a battle without fighting, then you've truly won. If you win by destroying a city, you've got yourself a headache. You go around being some superhero



GOTCHA! GUYS:
Students browse the "Death Gear" for sale at NABEA's bounty-hunting seminar in Lyndhurst.

the old pro. Rivkin, once the baddest piranha around, no longer has the tank to himself.

MANEI M. AND HIS TRINIDADIAN PARTNER, HAYDEN P., DO BETTER than most with a mainly local practice. Their specialty is tracking down men and women who lived in New York City legally as noncitizens but who committed a felony offense and went to prison. These people are subject to a unique form of double indemnity: Upon their release from prison, the INS immediately begins deportation proceedings, regardless of the severity or circumstances of the offense—even if they have lived in the United States since childhood.

While the process is under way, they are bonded back out into society. When the appeals are exhausted, their bonds are retracted. If they do not show up for their deportation hearings, the bondsmen send Manei and Hayden out to collect them. Sometimes the hunters use a van to pick off several people in a single sweep. Fre-

OLD-TIMER STAN RIVKIN used to store apprehended

gung ho guy, you just get a headache for yourself."

There was the time Manei and his *sensei*, Rivkin, staked out a house in a snowstorm in Pennsylvania, looking for a 68-year-old cocaine importer from Florida. After four days, they saw him on the street and rolled down the window to ask for directions. When the old man stopped, Manei called out harshly, "Hey! Jack! Why don't you get in the backseat? You're under arrest." The hunters jumped out of their vehicle, and within seconds, the man was cuffed. Once they'd shuffled him into the car, Manei changed tack, becoming the gangster's friend, agreeing to send him socks and T-shirts in jail. "And I did," the hunter remembers fondly.

The wiles are endless. "I make a phone call to a guy's house," Manei continues. "I'll ask for his wife or sister. Then [the guy]'ll say to me, 'She's not home right now; who's this?' I'll tell him: 'Tell her it's Mike. Who's this? Her brother?' Then I get him in a conversation—you know, I want to take her out, or whatever. Then I ask, 'What time can I call back?' I get his name because I've got him in conversation. Little tricks like that."

That's how Manei gets definitive proof the fugitive is in the house. "I know bounty hunters who call a house, the guy answers the phone, they raid the house, he's not there. Because he's got call-forwarding. So what do I do? I go to the apartment. I'll listen by the door. With my cellular phone, I'll dial the number. If the phone is ringing in there, I'll hear the person pick it up. And then I have an option. I'll either wait you out, or I'll go knock on the door. I usually prefer to wait."

On TV, there is a theatrical emphasis on the brute force it takes to apprehend bad guys. NABEA has advised members not to participate in the syndicated show *Bounty Hunters*, which recreates real hunts with real-life hunters. "They're too much into the Rambo-SWAT-team image," says Bob Burton. "They ignore the 97 percent of talking with attorneys, detectives, witnesses, and, most of all, the victim. There is very little kicking in doors. Less than 3 percent of the people we arrest resist us."

A good bounty hunter prefers to flush his quarry out with tactics closer to those of Sherlock Holmes than those of Steven Seagal, only rarely breaking down doors. After all, one never knows what's waiting on the other side. In Washington State two years ago, an overeager hunter opened a closet door and got shot in the face. Scare your not-quite-subdued quarry, and he might do something rash. One of New York's skip-tracers once chased a teenager onto a roof only to watch in horror as the young man, in his terror, tripped and fell over the edge.

Often Manei deals with this by confronting targets on the street with a name he knows *isn't* theirs. "I'll come up on you, show you some I.D. I'm gonna tell you, 'Listen, Mr. Rodriguez, you're under arrest.' He says, 'Okay, I'll come with you, but I'm gonna sue you. You got the wrong guy.' Once I have him in custody, in cuffs, I say, 'Listen, it's really you I'm looking for,' and I show him his picture. He says, 'Man! That was a good one!'"

Manei has a new trainee, Leo. Leo found his way into the business the way Mr. M. did—through an old-fashioned apprenticeship. As Manei explains while Leo is out on the street spying on a house in the Bronx, "You've got to do all kinds of shit. When we're teaching you, and we're doing it for free, you've got to break your bones for us."

THE CUSTOM OF ALLOWING PRISONERS BACK INTO SOCIETY BEFORE trial has its origins in Norman England. Because dungeon conditions frequently finished inmates off before they ever set foot in court, judges began releasing prisoners into the hands of their family members or fellow villagers. No money changed hands; if the prisoners legged it, their guardians could swing in their place (though in practice, the Crown usually exercised mercy and

levied a fine). But the Tudor courts hammered out some of the system's roughest edges, and the substitution of money or chattel as bail gained acceptance. Bail soon begat bounty hunters, who were hired out-of-pocket by family members (since England has never had legal bondsmen). By the eighteenth century, London newspapers were chronicling the escapades of bounty-hunting gangs like the Broyles Street Boys. In England, bounty hunting finally disappeared in the nineteenth century, leaving the field to the police. The United States is today the only country that allows bounty hunters to apprehend bail jumpers.

Nationally, there are an estimated 2,100 men and women who call themselves bounty hunters. Bob Burton calculates that NABEA has more than 250 members in New York State and New Jersey. Still, there are plenty of people—Rivkin, for example—who choose to operate outside of NABEA's purview. Freelance hunting is an antisocial, even paranoid affair. In a trade whose unofficial operative motto is "No body, no booty," established hunters fear colleagues who sell their services for a smaller percentage of the bond. And, of course, there's also a queasiness about captives coming back to seek vengeance on the guys who put them away.

New York hunters are generally employed by out-of-state bondsmen to track down fugitives who have disappeared into the roil of the city. Unlike in most states, where the bondsman has between one month and one year to return a fugitive to the court before the bail money is forfeited, in New York, the forfeit goes into effect as soon as a person fails to keep his or her court date. It is entirely up to the judge's discretion whether he will set aside the forfeiture and return the bond money should the defendant reappear.

Many judges will, in fact, give the bondsman up to a year to return the fugitive, but bondsmen such as Brooklyn's Helen Mavica, unwilling to send good money after bad, are reluctant to employ hunters, instead preferring to wait until the Police Department's 170-strong Warrant Squad brings the bailee in. Although the squad is notoriously inefficient—a recent ABC *PrimeTime Live* report estimated that 35,000 people (the majority of whom do not borrow from bondsmen) jump bail every year in New York, and the squad catches only 6,000 to 10,000 of these—its services don't cost anything. By contrast, if Mavica were to hire a hunter, she would have to pay him a fee upon the fugitive's arrest, even if the judge refused to "exonerate" the bond.

THERE IS NO HUNTING LIKE THE HUNTING of men, and those who have hunted long enough and liked it never care for anything else thereafter." The quote is Hemingway via NABEA's training manual.

"Street smarts really come into play in a town like New York City," Bob Burton tells his audience as he paces back and forth on the blue carpet in a conference room at a Quality Inn in Lyndhurst, New Jersey. Eight to ten times a year, NABEA's founder conducts three-day training sessions around the country. On the last weekend of October, 32 people dropped \$427 apiece and made their way to Lyndhurst so Burton—who covered Central America for *Soldier of Fortune* magazine in the eighties and who counts G. Gordon Liddy as a business associate and friend—could teach them how to "psychologically overwhelm the weak." Since automatic NABEA membership is conferred at the course's end, these weekends do a lot to burnish Burton's godfather stature within the business.

Of the students present at the Quality Inn seminar, nearly half were from New York City. There are repo men and social workers, students from John Jay College, and a 41-year-old grandmother (the only woman in the class) studying computer science at Hunter and looking to salt her midlife years with

ugitives in his Franklin Square basement overnight.

some adventure, "experience different walks of life," she says. There aren't many women in the business—and none in New York are full-time—but there is a hunter in San Francisco, Mackenzie Green, who's appeared on several TV shows and runs her own Website, Bounty Hunters Online.

Under the conference room's enormous, low-hanging chandeliers, Burton and several colleagues tell war stories and swap macho, innuendo-drenched, backslapping repartee. "In this business, you're going to be dealing with swines [*sic*], scum, street trash, and with lawyers, attorneys, and cops," says Burton, pausing long enough for a crony to repeat the "swines, scum, street trash" chorus. "Suhn uhm'va bitch," Burton exclaims, and the audience roars.

The lights go out, and students watch a few documentaries, including a BBC production about a California bondsman who ends up catching his man by shooting into the dirt in front of his motorbike as he tries to flee.

The lights back on, Burton starts to shake the profession's dirty tricks out of the bag—from setting up "trap line" 800 phone numbers operated by companies such as Colorado's TelScan that automatically locate where the caller is phoning from to how to "spirit" (read: kidnap) fugitives out of other countries and back into the good old U.S. of A.

The scholars of subterfuge also learn how to use any branch of Domino's Pizza to get an address when all you have is a phone number. Call Domino's and order a pizza. When the operator asks your address, you then say: "I don't know, I'm at this dude's party. All I know is the phone number." Read the fugitive's number to the operator, and the sophisticated Domino's caller-I.D. system will spit out the address.

Other plays include phoning a fugitive's credit-card company after procuring his Social Security number from the court record. Impersonating the fugitive, one says something to the effect of "My wife has run off with my credit card. I don't want to press charges, but I wouldn't mind finding out what she's been charging." With a bit of luck, a gullible employee will read off the last few purchases, giving the hunter an idea of where his man is hiding out. There is also a way to identify a credit-card company's trip-up question ("What's your mother's maiden name?") in advance, too complicated to relate here. Doesn't this violate a ream of statutes? "It is legal for a bail-bondsman and his agent to access all of the defendant's financial records," says Burton. As for impersonating the fugitive, "it might be a gray area you could easily slip into," Burton says cryptically.

After two days of lectures, the students are herded into the parking lot and taught how to handcuff efficiently and thread leg shackles and belly chains around disruptive captives. And don't forget to make sure the captive sits in the right rear seat of the car: Otherwise, "he could push the seat forward, breaking the seat and pushing you forward to cause a wreck," explains George F., a graduate of the course. "Or he could choke you to death with his handcuffs."

Burton also discusses state and federal laws regarding bounty hunting and the carrying of weaponry ("In Arizona, it's a felony if you *don't* have a gun in your car," Burton says, pausing to make sure his audience gets the gag before wrapping things up with a hearty "Suhn uhm'va bitch"). Students are presented with the option of buying from a whole line of "Death Gear," which includes black SWAT-team-style clothing printed with FUGITIVE RECOVERY AGENT and a "Pneu-Gun ballistic baton," which promises to "take out a 300-pound man at 20 feet" with a 2½-ounce shot bag—no permit required. A salesman with emphysema hawks the goods between doses of oxygen taken through a tube in his nose à la Dennis Hopper in *Blue Velvet*.

At the course's conclusion, all participants receive a certificate that entitles them to purchase a badge something like a sheriff's star, useful mainly as a form of I.D. to be flashed at cops and prisoners. Burton admits in private that only about 15 percent of NABEA's membership, or 300 to 350 people across the country, can earn a living as full-time hunters. Alumni send their cards to bondsmen around the country, schmooze a lot, and hope to get a trickle of small jobs. Some parlay their experience into something bigger. But that could take a while. "Don't quit your day job if you have one," says Bob R.

LOUIS MCNEILL AND HIS POSSE ARE SOME OF BURTON'S MORE successful recent graduates. Hewing to the principle that there is safety in numbers, they tend to travel in a pack—all wearing blue bulletproof vests under those black jackets emblazoned with the words FUGITIVE RECOVERY AGENT. Louis McNeill is 25 and lives in Bushwick, and when he isn't hunting, he puts in time as a volunteer auxiliary cop. His view of things is Manichean: All fugitives are inherently evil, and anyone associated with them must be tainted, too.

"We've got a fuckin' problem here!" McNeill shouts into his cellular phone in front of an empty house in Far Rockaway sometime after 10 P.M. He has just realized that the indemnitor—in this case, the elderly mother-in-law of the woman they are looking for—has sold the house she'd put up for collateral, disappearing with the proceeds. As he talks, self-proclaimed "Special Agent" McNeill works himself up into a frenzy of rage: "I want 30 grand [the value of the bond]! If she just sold the house, fuck the bitch!" Then he turns plaintive. "I'm working out here naked right now. I'm working my ass off right now, and I come to a gutted house!"

Determined to locate her, he makes a few phone calls to friends in the Police Department. Nothing comes up. So he resorts to that tried-and-true method: dialing 411. And what do you know? "The bitch is listed!" he shouts triumphantly, pumping the air with his fist. "Ain't this a beautiful thing?"

Four carloads of angry hunters drive off to Jamaica to pay a house call.

AT ELEVEN AT NIGHT, MARQUITA, HER MIDDLE-aged son, and her two teenage grandsons are in bed. There's a persistent knocking at her door. She and her son eventually come down the stairs. They look through the screen door and see seven men and one teenage woman, all dressed in black, standing around the porch.

Flashing badges, the visitors identify themselves as fugitive-recovery agents.

"Why you come to my house this time of night?" says the woman, who stands firm in her skimpy lace nightgown, seemingly more irritated than frightened.

"We have the right to search your house," McNeill booms. Since he has no knowledge that the fugitive is in the house, and since he is not empowered by any search warrant, McNeill is skittering about on thin ice here. But the woman doesn't know it. And even if she did, who is she going to complain to? The hunters aren't about to go away, and she wants her door left intact. Reluctantly, she lets them in. Theoretically, had Marquita refused to open her door, McNeill could not have entered her house legally. But by telling her he has this power, and playing on her ignorance of the law, he has managed to get himself invited in.

The crew ushers Marquita and her son and two grandsons into the living room. A few peel off and station themselves around the house. There's no violence, but there is definitely *menace*.

HUNTERS KNOW TO CALL Domino's Pizza if they need

McNeill, wearing a backward baseball cap, sits down on the sofa with Marquita and begins to interrogate her. His spiel ricochets from lawyerese to cop talk to psychobabble to the words of a parent scolding a wayward child. Repeatedly, he says, "I'm trying to keep this on a professional level." He informs Marquita of her legal position as indemnitor even though she already knows it. She's not happy with her daughter-in-law, either, and calls her a "dog" for running off on bail. He tells her that if the daughter-in-law doesn't show up, Marquita's pension from her years as a NYNEX operator will be subject to partial seizure. It is, he confides in her, "a messy situation." But if she works with him, he'll work with the judge on saving her pension. (Since bounty hunters have no special influence with the court, this is a somewhat extravagant promise. But it's all part of Louis's rap.)

James, a Nassau County security guard with prematurely salt-and-pepper hair, a little man with a puffed-up ego, goes into the kitchen to rifle through Marquita's address book. He is accompanied by the teenage girl, who lives on Long Island and is riding with the boys for kicks. Playing tough for the girl's benefit, James asks if there is a photo of the fugitive in the house, and when Marquita answers that there isn't, he shouts at her that she's a liar. "Don't get funky with me!" the grandmother shoots back. When her son, the bail jumper's husband, protests the search, James assumes a deep voice and growls, "I have the right, sir!" He finds a few old numbers in the phone book and announces victoriously, "You said you hadn't heard from her. Her number's in here five times. Your credibility's crap!"

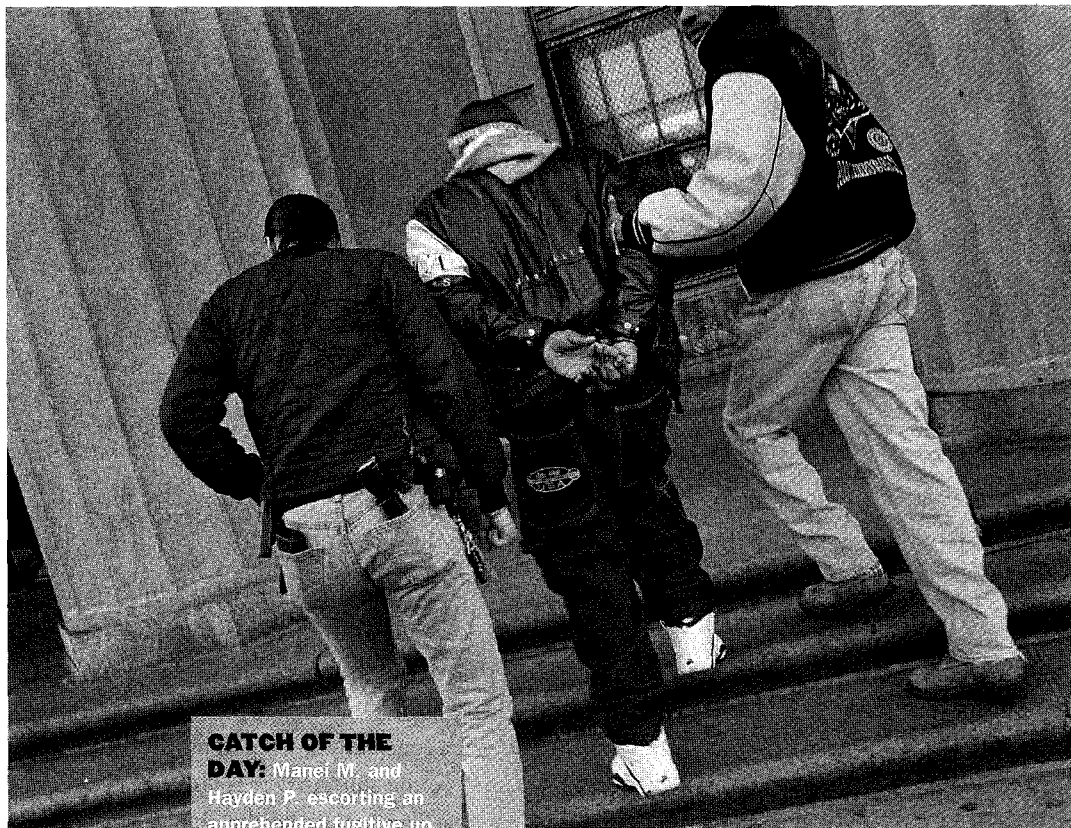
Marquita's son alternates between rambling fury and sullen cooperation. While the others are making a lot of noise and finding out nothing, Jamaican-born "Special Agent" Rali takes him on a walk and, seducing him with the bonhomie of a fellow countryman, gradually squeezes out a few tidbits.

The hunters depart, leaving behind a business card in case the family hears anything. It's midnight, and the cars speed back toward Brooklyn on the Van Wyck Expressway. "Rali, we gonna piss people off tomorrow?" McNeill asks jovially. "You know that, baby! You know!"

They're confident that in the morning, Marquita's son will phone Rali and provide additional information allowing them to locate the woman. But the call doesn't come. And James's phone numbers lead nowhere. A couple of weeks later, at NABEA's Lindhurst seminar, McNeill reveals that the bail jumper's husband mentioned a name the woman might be using to Rali during their walk. McNeill ran it through his computer and discovered that the fugitive *had* changed her name and Social Security number. But he couldn't get her address. What he does know is that the indemnitor surely knew as much as the husband, and wasn't telling. "That lying bitch," he snorts.

IN ROOM 136 OF THE MARRIOTT HOTEL, ON THE OUTSKIRTS of La Guardia Airport, Sean, still handcuffed, settles into a green armchair by the window. Scott turns the TV on for him and surfs the channels until he lands on HBO. It's 9:35 in the morning, and Scott and George are waiting for Louis and Rali, who—for a small fee—will sit on Sean until the bondsman shows up to escort Sean back to Greensboro.

Ten minutes later, the junior hunters knock on the door and enter the room. Feeling generous, Scott hands a wad of cash to Louis and tells him to order up a pot of coffee and some bagels for all of them, including Sean. The older men tell Sean to take care of himself as they head out to make their second catch of the day.



CATCH OF THE DAY: Manel M. and Hayden P. escorting an apprehended fugitive up the steps of the Supreme Court in the Bronx.

Later that night, Sean phones Melissa from North Carolina. He is going to stand trial, do his time—probably only a few months—and then return to New York. All things considered, Melissa is taking things fairly calmly. She thought George, who had done most of the shouting, had been "pretty rude." But "the smaller guy, under the circumstances, was as pleasant as he could be." She'd known that Sean was wanted for jumping bail, and once Scott and George had identified themselves as bail enforcers, she'd felt no physical fear. What upsets her most is that Sean will miss Nasira's first birthday.

Sean is philosophical about being taken back into custody. "I did wrong," he says with resignation. "But I wasn't out in New York selling drugs. I was working—I'd been looking for a job every day for three months and just got one two days ago. Now I'll have to start all over again when I get back to New York. I hate it when they ask you about those gaps: 'Where *were* you?' " His father, though, will be a happy man. "He's the one who, uh, bailed me out," Sean says, grinning sheepishly.

street address when all they have is a phone number.

Oedipus & Podhoretz

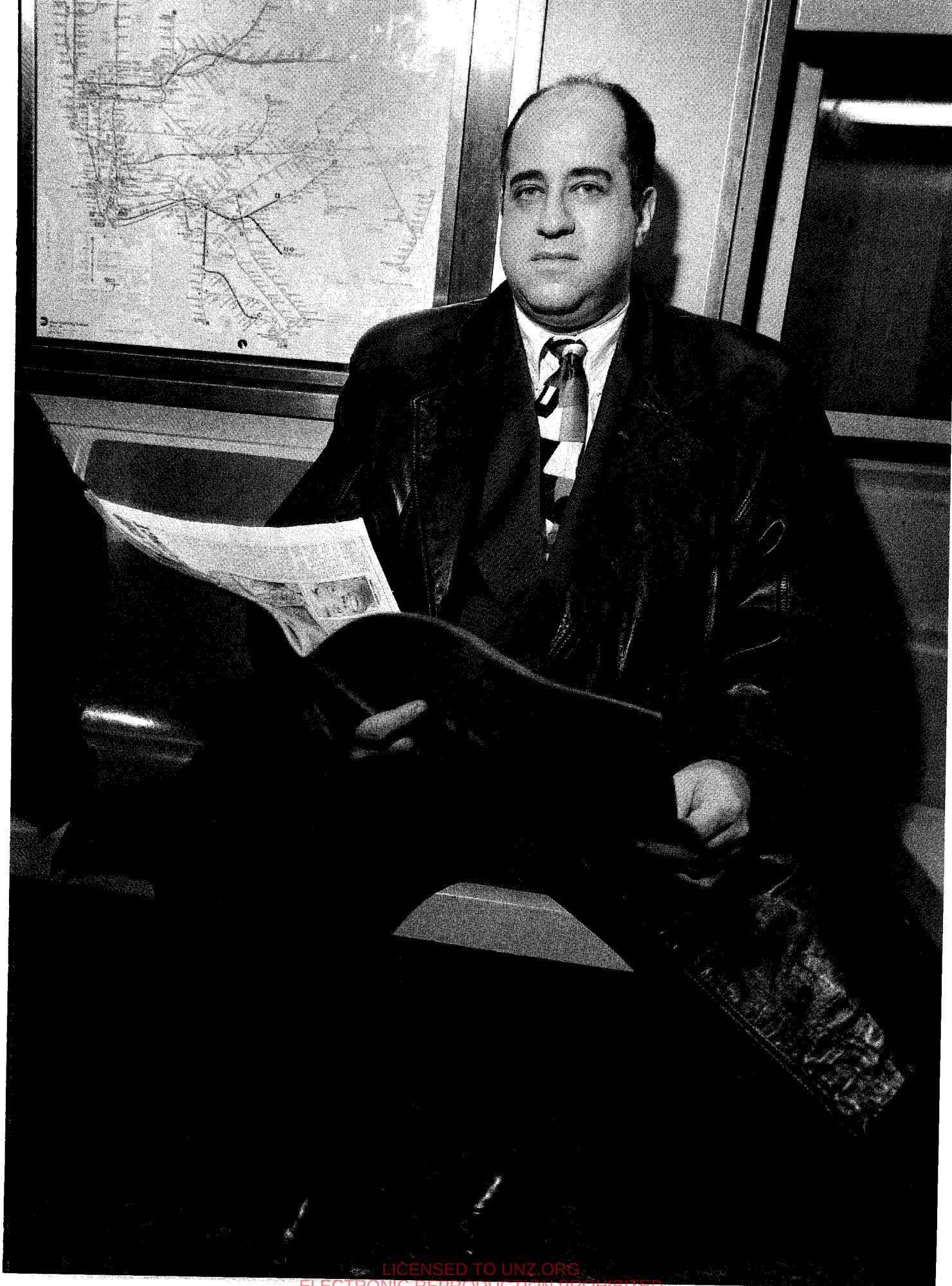
His father fought Stalinists. But for *Post* edit-page chief John Podhoretz, sitcoms are the battleground of freedom. BY HANNA ROSIN

THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE ABOUT JOHN PODHORETZ, THE NEW EDITOR OF THE New York *Post*'s editorial page, is that he's constantly moving. If his hands are not pushing up the sleeves of his fine cotton shirt, they're rolling a pen halfway across the desk, then rolling it back again. His startling blue eyes dart from the door to the phone to someplace out the window, then back to the door again. In almost a month, he's made almost no effort to move into his vast new office; about the only thing in it is a kind of mini-shrine to himself—two shelves full of his own book, *Hell of a Ride*, about the Bush administration, alongside a history of Casanova. He came back to New York, the city where he grew up, after two and a half years in Washington as deputy editor of *The Weekly Standard*, a place he expected to spend his whole life. "I've worked as someone's deputy, and now it's time for me to run something," he says. "It's time for me to run my own shop." ■ That "someone" is Bill Kristol, Washington's best-known Republican commentator. The two started the magazine together, but it became "Bill's magazine. . . . He didn't do anything to make that

P H O T O G R A P H B Y D A V I D B A R R Y

Five-time *Jeopardy!* winner John Podhoretz, a man who once, according to his mother, had to lock his TV in the closet to keep from watching it, is now one of the chief gatekeepers of conservative thought. But can a man who knows that much trivia help bring the right into the new millennium?





happen," explains Podhoretz. "He's just a major American celebrity."

Coming to New York will allow Podhoretz to step out of Kristol's large shadow while taking along certain of his lessons. Podhoretz plans to import the *Standard's* "cheerful" vision of conservatism to the New York *Post*, a vision personified by the charming ways of Bill Kristol. "It's time to view the conservative movement as in ascendancy," Podhoretz explains, "and not fighting the rear guard."

Under Eric Breindel, the *Post's* editorial page became one of the most influential platforms in American conservatism by adopting an embattled, us-against-the-world tone. In the *Post's* worldview, the liberals and the counterculture and non-English speakers and residents of the Bronx were always on the verge of taking over—op-ed writers like Scott McConnell and Hilton Kramer manned the battlements.

But according to Podhoretz, New York is over its funk. Fifteen years ago, Podhoretz lived in an apartment three blocks from where the *Post's* offices are now. In those days, the street was peopled with "hookers with Adam's apples" and scores of nervous, ineffectual cops. Now he looks out his window and sees a "clean, busy, crowded street." The city has become a "buoyant" place, run by a Republican mayor and a governor pushing "unexpectedly energetic policies"—the ideal testing ground for Podhoretz's optimism.

Breindel was succeeded by editorial writer Scott McConnell. But after McConnell was fired for a column about Puerto Rican statehood that offended even the *Post's* sturdy sensibilities, Breindel recommended Podhoretz for his old job. "He's a real New Yorker," says Breindel. "He has a feel for the nature of the discourse in the city."

TO SAY THAT PODHORETZ HAS A FEEL for the nature of discourse in the city is putting it mildly. He's the son of the prominent, pugnacious neoconservatives Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter, two people who have almost never put anything mildly. In fact, the two were largely responsible for creating the image, persistent even during the Reagan era, of the right-winger as victim.

And for John Podhoretz, the name, as even his mother admits, is "a lot of baggage." When he worked at the conservative Washington *Times*, the joke goes,

people thought his name was "John P. Normanson," because the paper's editor, Arnaud de Borchgrave, a friend of his parents', walked around the office introducing him as John Podhoretz, Norman's son. He is very close to his family; he stayed with his parents recently while he was looking for an apartment, and he is good friends with Elliott Abrams, the Reagan undersecretary of state convicted of lying to Congress during the Iran-contra affair and Podhoretz's brother-in-law. But his parents say he rarely asks for professional advice. "When you have controversial parents, people have expectations about you," Podhoretz says. "If every day at work I thought to myself, *How does this relate to them?*, I'd be paralyzed."

Podhoretz was born on the Upper West Side in 1961, just as his parents were making their rancorous break from liberalism. From an early age, he was already steeped in the conservative views of his transformed father. "He takes things for granted that we had to struggle our way to intellectually," says his mother.

John and the other children of neo-cons—Kristol is the son of Irving Kristol and Gertrude Himmelfarb—are often referred to as the mini-cons. The label misleads. The parents are defined by rifts, New York intellectuals molded by the upheavals of the fifties, a time when friendships ended over ideology. The children are conservatives from birth, more Washington than New York, more interested in politics than in ideology, and practically indistinguishable from any other Reaganites.

"John is impatient with ideological quarrels," says his mother. He considers bitter feuds over, say, Hannah Arendt a waste of time, friendships lost over nothing.

Podhoretz went to Columbia Prep, then headed west to the University of Chicago. He, like many other conservatives of his generation, studied with Allan Bloom (*The Closing of the American Mind*).

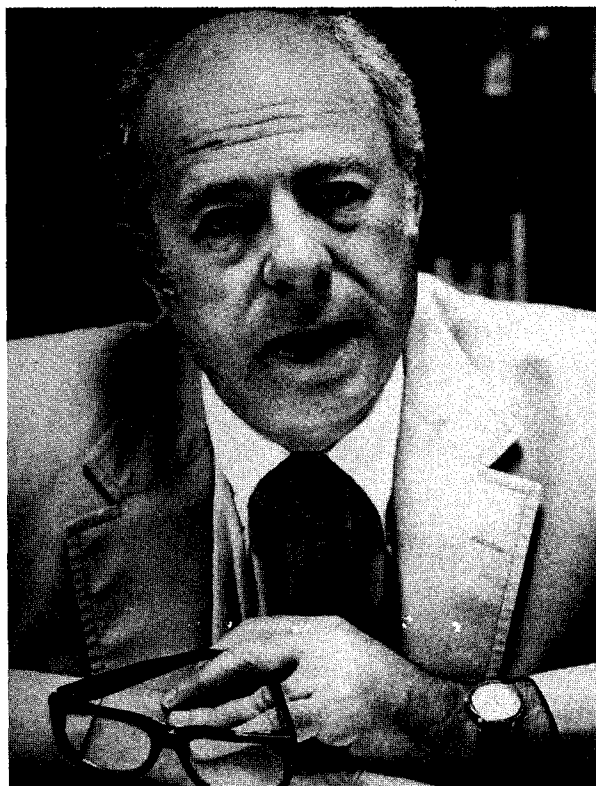
Fresh out of college, the young Podhoretz took a job as a researcher at *Time*, standard grunt work for an aspiring journalist. After a little more than a year, the grunt work grew old; he asked for a promotion to writer

and was turned down. This made him suspicious. "The reason I was given was this: I was too young," he writes in an essay (in fact, he was all of 22 at the time). "The reason I was not given was this: I was too conservative."

Since then, Podhoretz has skipped from job to job, staying at none for much more than eighteen months. He has worked mostly at conservative publications—editing and writing for the Washington *Times* and *Insight* magazine as well as working for *Time* and, briefly, *U.S. News & World Report*. He was the New York *Post's* television critic for a year and spent nine months in the White House.

NORMAN PODHORETZ'S GIFT—OR curse, depending on how you look at it—is to see himself at the center of history. As a writer, he's a narcissist. Critical occasions for America, for the world, grew out of his personal experience. Both his books, *Breaking Ranks* and *Making It*, are memoirs, tracing his own life as the paragon of an age. His disgust with Stalinism is the universal disgust; his drive for success is a reminder of an abandoned American ideal.

John Podhoretz has inherited his father's literary narcissism, but without the ideological vigor. Instead, he decided early on his model would be Robert Warshaw, a movie reviewer for *Commentary* in the fifties. "The rest of us were interested in boring topics, like foreign policy," says his friend Daniel Cass. "John only wanted to



In Norman Podhoretz's acrimonious break with the intellectual left, modern conservatism was born. But with no great ideological battles to occupy him, his son advocates a cheerful brand of conservatism—his bitterest battles concern office politics.



Podhoretz with Bill Kristol and Fred Barnes in the newsroom of *The Weekly Standard*. Podhoretz launched the *Standard* with Kristol in September 1995; but Kristol was the clear superstar, and Podhoretz eventually felt eclipsed.

talk about movies and television."

So his parents spent their life at war with Communism; the younger Podhoretz has spent much of his life at war with sitcoms.

For five years on and off, Podhoretz wrote a column for the conservative Moonie-owned newspaper the *Washington Times*, in which he lived out the banal life of a twentysomething on the page—one of America's first bathetic, solipsistic Gen-Xers (around the *Washington Times* offices, the column was often read out loud in Podhoretz's absence, for comic value, in a ritual famously called Podenfreude).

No subject was too trivial to share with readers. Topics included his trip to an amusement park; his hatred of household pets; his love of Jell-O; conversations with his imaginary friend. He recounted events in mind-numbing detail: "I missed the 2:30 shuttle, so I had to wait for the 3:30 shuttle . . . I arrived in Washington at 5:15." He'd also do things like type "SEX SEX SEX SEX SEX sex sex sex sex sex," apropos of nothing ("I can see your eyes drifting"). One column ended with "Podhoretz . . . this is without question the dumbest column you've ever written. Stop it now!"

An unmistakable subtext in his columns is his struggle to deal with the titanic intellectual figure of his father. In

one of them, for instance, he describes how he and his friends used to play games such as "The \$10,000 Pyramid," but with clues like "What Ludwig Wittgenstein would say."

They stopped playing, Podhoretz implies, because girls thought they were nerdy: "There is no way a man (or woman) is going to be wildly attractive to the opposite sex if he (or she) starts quoting Lionel Trilling's essay on Henry James's 'The Princess Casamassima' instead of saying 'Do you like Thai food?'"

Over the years, the Jack Benny voice gradually disappeared, and he often railed with the same intensity and grandiosity that his father once wielded against Stalinists; the younger Podhoretz's targets, however, tended to be people like Ellen DeGeneres.

Actually, Podhoretz is best when he writes about popular culture on its own terms. "There's no *Seinfeld* or *Mary Tyler Moore* reference he wouldn't get," says his friend Meredith Berkman. His mother says he's had to lock his television in the closet to keep himself from watching. He's also a five-time *Jeopardy!* champion. When he tones down the rant, this vast database of trivia can make him a charming critic.

But when he strays into politics he gets cruder, plugging the cultural trivia into his grand, prepackaged ideology. He's written

that the success of *Ellen* means liberals consider "homosexuality the defining issue of the day." In an article called "Dole, the GOP, and the Genetically Endowed," Podhoretz argues that the arrival of a new crop of blondes with "Rachel-from-*Friends* hairstyles" meant the conservative movement was revived. "The 22-year-olds look like winners because they are. They are eye-catching, they speak well, they are quick if not deep. They have bestowed their bounty on the GOP, in the service of conservatism." (Not surprisingly, the blondes were not amused: "If this is his sweet way of asking all of us for a date, it has failed, as have his direct attempts in the past," one wrote.)

Podhoretz even turned his own stint in politics into sitcom fodder. In 1988 and '89, he worked in the White House, first as a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan and then in the office of the drug czar. After nine months, he grew bored and decided to write a book. His original notion was to write a serious, highbrow book about the importance of individualism, and on that basis, he got a book contract from Simon & Schuster.

After a few months, he decided to write about life in the White House instead. Here was his chance to mull over real politics, react to the failed Bush years, consider the Reagan legacy. Instead, he wrote a funny, gossipy book about West Wing culture, young Bushies "packed in like sardines at the Woodward Building on Fifteenth Street, and just screwing [their] brains out."

For Podhoretz, embracing the language of popular culture is a way to distinguish his own attitudes from his father's cornered-animal conservatism. "There are two possibilities for people who hold my kind of views," he explains. "You can be almost entirely rejectionist of contemporary life, and only see old books and old movies, but I don't have that luxury, since I didn't live in that time. I don't feel alienated from American culture, but I understand people who do."

Instead, Podhoretz indulges in popular culture, racing to movie theaters sometimes several times a weekend, only to criticize its decrepitude. It's a way of having one's pop-cultural cake and eating it too, of being both cool and reactionary.

SO FAR AT THE POST, PODHORETZ HAS made at least one move toward making the op-ed page a more cheerful place. Within days of his arrival, he fired America's most cheerless critic, Hilton Kramer, the editorial page's media critic and a man for whom no painting, book, or film—or at least none created in the past half-century—ever measured up. Podhoretz will say only that Kramer's col-

umn had "run its course."

But, aside from seeing Kramer's departure, you will be hard-pressed to detect this kinder, gentler voice. In Podhoretz's first week, for instance, he wrote an editorial calling Alton Maddox, a lawyer for Tawana Brawley, a "vicious hyena." In a paper stocked with the columns of Steve Dunleavy and Andrea Peyser, where the devil is everywhere (the killer Macy's float, a thuggish bike messenger . . .) and the hero is always a cop's cop, Podhoretz's page is so far another screaming voice.

Fred Siegel, a balanced if wonkish columnist who was the paper's most reasonable voice, left last week after a fight over one of his columns. Siegel had written what he thought was a newsbreaking column lamenting the departure of Patricia Woodworth, Governor Pataki's budget director. The column fell flat by Dunleavy standards but broke some juicy unreported details about a particular kind of "pre-modern pork," as Siegel called it, and gave Pataki suggestions on how to stem it. If Podhoretz was looking for ways to "guide" his Republican allies along, the column, which eventually ran in *Newsday*, would have been a good start.

SIEGEL AND KRAMER WON'T BE THE only two who are soon gone, if Podhoretz's previous career is any indication. Scattered around Washington are bitter former employees or friends of Podhoretz; some are known as Pod scholars. Pod stories are gleefully and wickedly traded in Washington like sniffs of glue. It's clear he had a problem keeping staff; when he returned to the Washington *Times* after an absence, almost half the 40 or so writers who worked under him eventually quit or asked to be transferred. Podhoretz seems to respond to a hierarchy of power. Elders like de Borchgrave adore him; friends like Dan Cass loved working with him; but some who worked under him find him suffocating.

At the *Standard*, Podhoretz did much of the heavy lifting. Kristol was no "absentee landlord," says Podhoretz, but both he and Fred Barnes, the executive

editor, spent a fair amount of time jetting between talk shows and the lecture circuit. Podhoretz wasn't satisfied working behind the scenes, and last summer he demanded a bigger title. Kristol resisted, and the *Post* job became the elegant exit strategy.

Before his exit, Podhoretz exhibited a certain status anxiety in a more flamboyant way. He complained obsessively when he found out Fred Barnes's office would be bigger than his. He insisted his secretary have a wall around her office so no one would read his mail. Once, at a meeting, an assistant tried to teach the staff how to transfer calls, and Podhoretz barked, "Bill Kristol and I don't transfer calls."

His "arrogance and egotism had a psychological effect people can't quite believe," says one staff member. He treated his favorites well; but others he alienated so much that they will never write for the magazine again.

Podhoretz blames his reputation on Lisa McCormack, one of the writers at the Washington *Times* he liked least. But after about twenty interviews with many peo-

ple who've worked with Podhoretz over the years, it's clear McCormack is just one of the few brave enough to speak. "If you misplaced a comma, he would tell you you were a no-talent dirtball," McCormack says. "He was even mean to interns." Among the staff, she has earned the half-joking nickname Elie Wiesel, for speaking up for the victims.

AT THE *TIMES*, Podhoretz was "permanently frozen in juvenilia," as one older writer put it—working with writers sometimes twice his age, and resenting it. When a writer would challenge Podhoretz, he would say, "I've worked for six magazines; how many have you worked for?" recall writers on the staff. "There was an enormous gap between the power he had and his view of himself," says a former colleague.

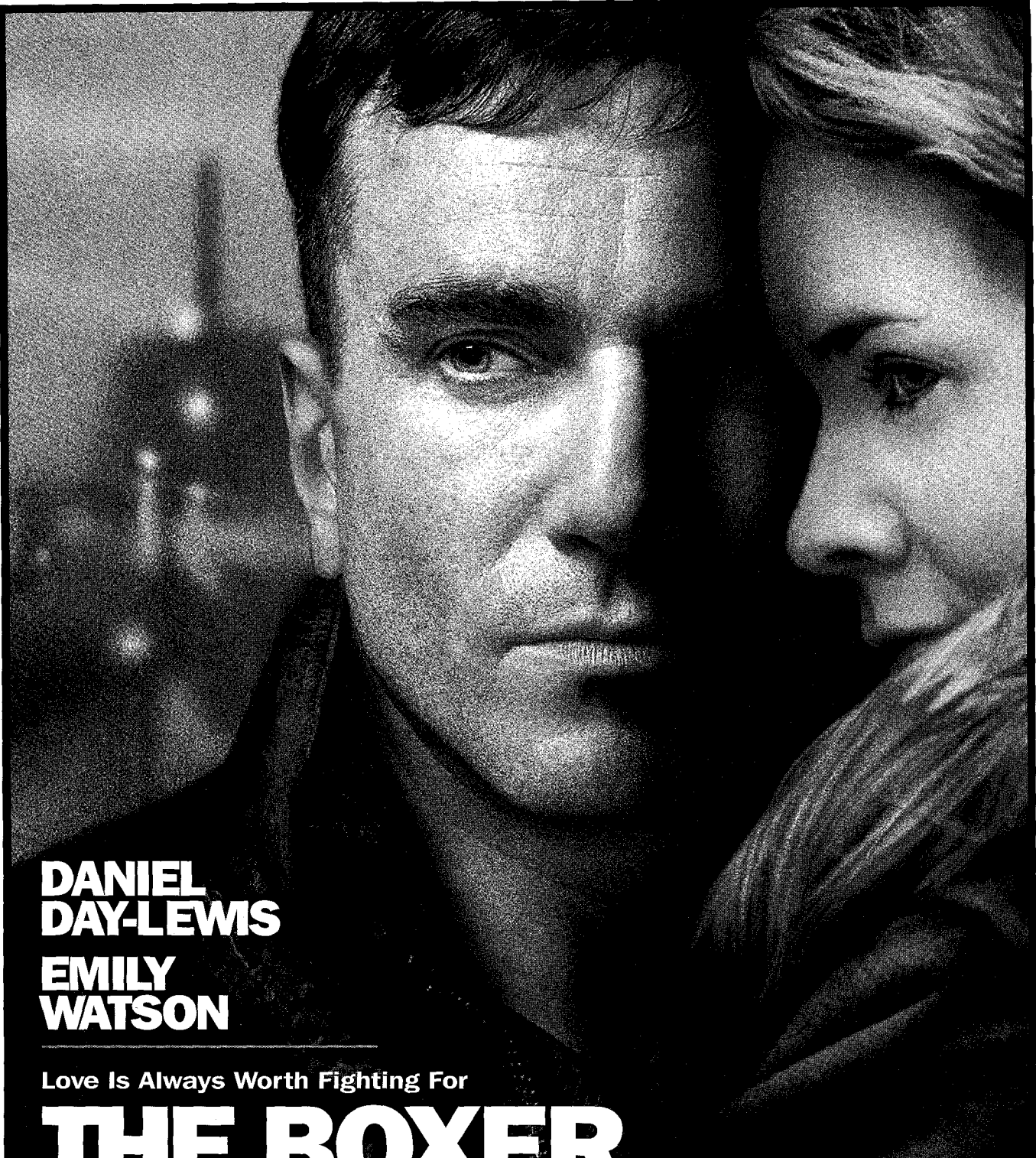
One other person spoke on the record. The Miami *Herald's* Central American bureau chief Glenn Garvin was at first friends with Podhoretz when he was at

the *Times*, but "ultimately his astounding self-centeredness made it difficult to maintain a friendship," says Garvin. (Podhoretz once talked for twenty minutes at an editorial meeting about when he might get his own private office.) "On the subject of himself he has no sense of humor," says Garvin. He recalls seeing a letter Podhoretz wrote to the University of Chicago saying he would no longer support the institution because it had failed to mention the conservative college newspaper he founded in a fund-raising letter. "Almost everybody, friend and foe, thought he was full of himself," says Garvin. "He continuously complained that his brilliance wasn't appreciated."

The brilliance of Podhoretz will always be appreciated by someone, however. John's parents will always happily listen to their son, although they may tune out when he gets to the part about *Mary Tyler Moore*. And if they happen to be engaged in some war of words over Hannah Arendt or Alger Hiss or the perfidy of Lillian Hellman, there's always the comfort of a soft couch and a remote control.



As editor of the New York Post's editorial page, Podhoretz hopes to bring to it a more positive viewpoint. He has made his mark already; since he signed on, he has fired one columnist, the fierce cultural reactionary Hilton Kramer, and driven another to leave.



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Small-Scale Operation

Though they're not much bigger than one of Playskool's Cool Tools, these minis are *not* toys. Sanderson, the British manufacturer of high-end specialty woodworking tools, makes them to the exacting standards of their regular-size counterparts, with brass fittings and spring-steel blades. The range includes all the essentials—from try squares to sliding bevels to spirit levels—so miniaturists, model builders, and dollhouse-makers should take note (from \$9.99 for a woodworker's clamp to \$39.99 for a bullnose plane).

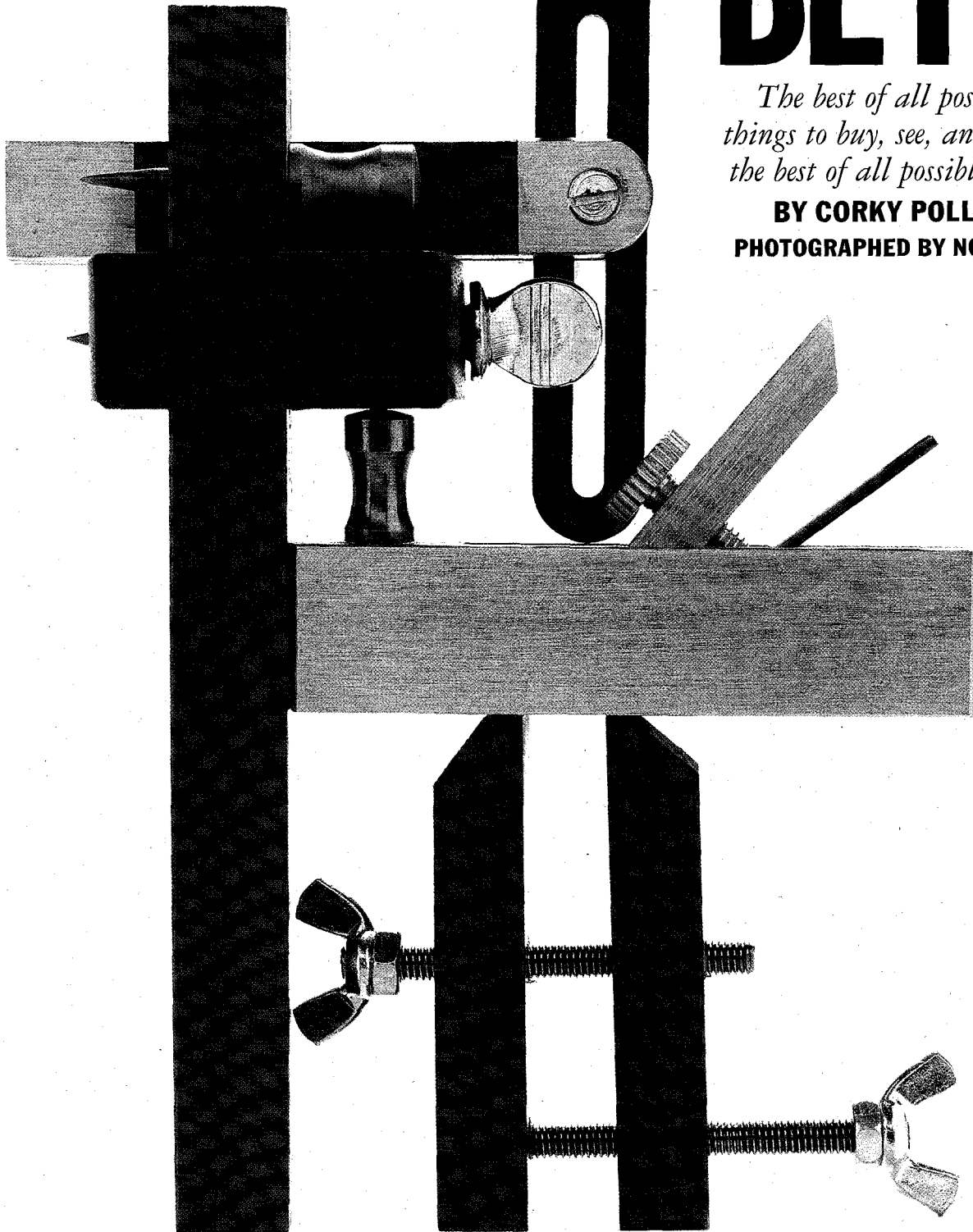
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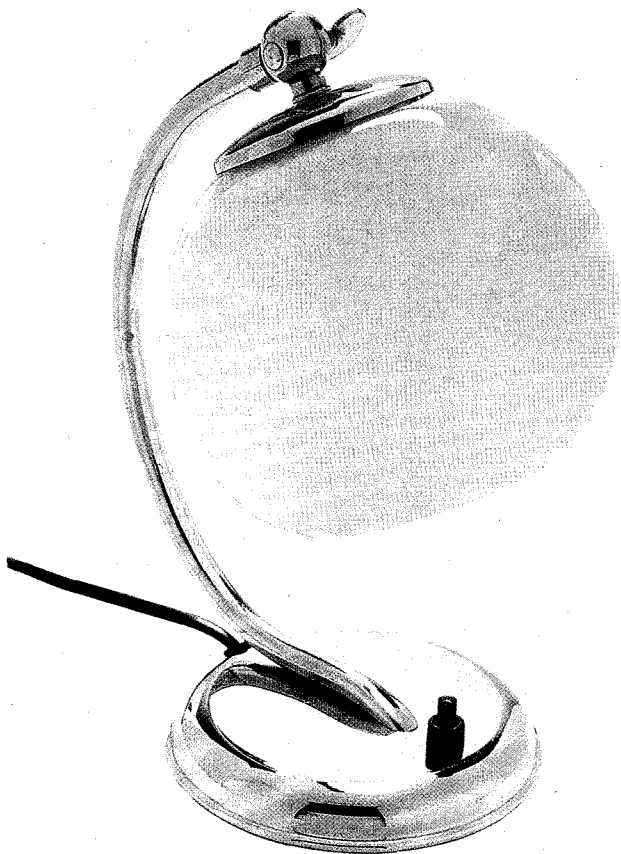
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BY CORKY POLLAN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NORMAN





Northern Lights

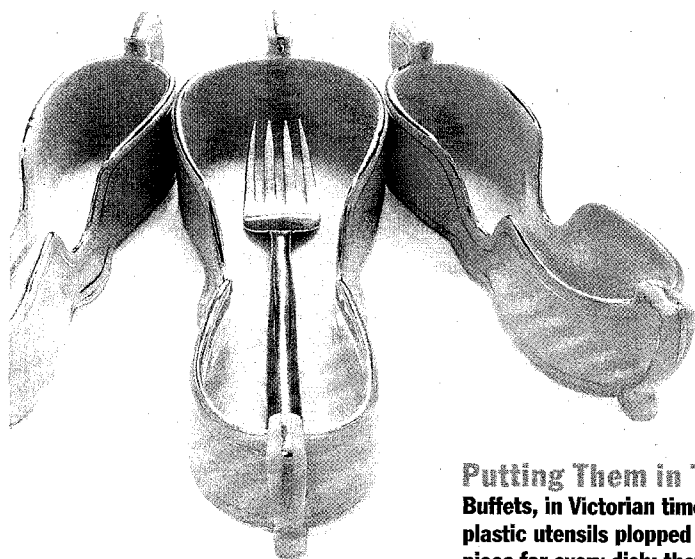
The word *Scandinavian* conjures up aquavit, smorgasbord, and modern (as in home furnishings). Rarely does Art Deco come to mind. Yet this style, created by French designers between the wars, did have its devotees in the land of the fjords. These graceful Danish glass-and-chrome night lamps from the thirties are elegant proof (\$275).

SAN LORENZO/123 West Broadway/766-4770

Overnight Success

Maria Turgeon, designer of stylish handbags, hankered for a *simple* weekender, but when she couldn't find one that met her minimalist standards she created her own. It's made of washable PVC and fully lined, with detachable shoulder straps. Turgeon did deviate from utter Spartanism by fabricating it in outrageous tomato red and adding hand-cast silver-plated hardware (\$375).

BARNEYS NEW YORK/The Co-op



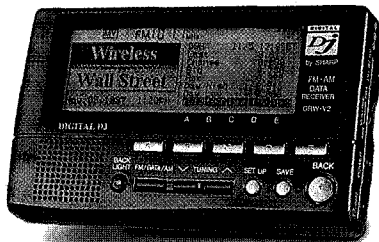
Putting Them in Their Place

Buffets, in Victorian times, were definitely not casual affairs—no paper plates or plastic utensils plopped in a mug. Not only did the Victorians have a specific serving piece for every dish; they even had separate caddies for the knives, forks, and spoons. In the spirit of the season, La Maison Moderne has imported fête-worthy porcelain caddies trimmed in 24-karat gold from Italy (\$75 for a set of three).

LA MAISON MODERNE/144 West 19th Street/691-9603

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Wall Street to Go

Who needs the Money Honey? Cut yourself free from CNBC with the Digital DJ receiver, the first real-time wireless stock monitor. You can get the receiver itself (which tracks up to 127 stocks that you specify and has an AM/FM radio and headphones thrown in) free if you sign up for a year of service at \$62.45 a month. J&R COMPUTER WORLD/17 Park Row/238-9100



Flatland

The word in the aisles at the recent Las Vegas Comdex tech-head conference was that flat-panel computer monitors should start to drop in price as manufacturers (including IBM, Mitsubishi, and Panasonic) gear up to mass-produce. But if you can't wait to pack away your bulky old cathode-ray-tube monitor, Samsung's SyncMaster 400TFT (14-inch viewable, with built-in stereo speakers and microphone) is a stylish option built around state-of-the-art, flicker-free active-matrix LCD technology, and at just 2.5 inches deep (8.7 inches with the base), it'll hog a lot less space on your desktop (\$2,379).

COMPUSA/420 Fifth Avenue/764-6224



Small-minded

Panasonic improves on its ultra-sleek PalmCam series of digital cameras with the new PV-DC1080, a sexy little featherweight with a footprint roughly the size of a credit card. Unlike its predecessor, the PV-DC1000, the 1080 features an optical viewfinder, a detachable flash, and a 2X zoom lens. A removable CompactFlash memory card stores up to 85 images (which you can view on the 1.8-inch LCD screen on the back), ready for downloading into your Mac or Windows PC (\$499.95).

THE SHARPER IMAGE/4 West 57th Street/489-7629

TEST DRIVE

30 DAYS WITH A NEW TECH TOY

James Bond, Phone Home

Most of us are not beeper people. Rarely are we summoned to attend to mothers in labor or strung-out club kids looking for a quick fix. I'm no exception, but the 30 days I spent with the Seiko MessageWatch convinced me that there is room for a pager in my life—as long as it's strapped to my wrist.

The MessageWatch is actually the world's most accurate timepiece (it sets itself to the Atomic Clock at least 36 times a day), a personal information system (it retrieves sports, weather, and financial info), and a pager. Here are a few of the things I learned during my 30 days:

- I don't know where, or even what, the Atomic Clock is, but I really like the fact that I'm in sync with it.

- Along with basic numerical pages, you can send text messages to the MessageWatch via phone, e-mail, or the Web. The magic of this feature, I found, is not in the NASA-worthy technology that makes it all possible but rather in the urban haiku-like creations that arrive randomly throughout the day. For example, I once received, within the span of 30 minutes, the curious triptych "Call of fice," "Send photos," "Eat shit."
- Indiglo rules. Unfortunately, the MessageWatch doesn't come with Indiglo. (It's got a pathetic little old-fashioned lightbulb.)

- When you're wearing a MessageWatch, strangers on the bus feel compelled to ask (a) "How much does it cost?" and then (b) "Does it vibrate?" The answer to the former is "\$14.95 a month" (the watch itself, available in different styles, starts at \$79.95; call 800-724-3585 for stores) and to the latter, a regrettable "no." The MessageWatch just beeps a lot when a page arrives, so you're forced to live with the paradox that on any given day you are exactly as annoying as you are popular. Then again, the lack of vibrato also reduces the temptation to strap on elsewhere and let callers experience what it's *really* like to reach out and touch someone.

ROBERT MORITZ



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TURN CITY ISLAND INTO THE ÎLE DE la Cité? Sounds unlikely, but innkeeper and chef Pierre Saint-Denis has brought some flavor from his native Normandy to a nineteenth-century sea captain's house on the island. Prix fixe dinner is usually \$40 per person, but if you reserve a room for \$85 (no more than one week in advance), dinner is \$10 a head. *Le Refuge Inn*, 620 City Island Ave. (call for reservations; 718-885-2478); A.E., checks; through 1/31.

Here Ferré, Gone Tomorrow

GIANFRANCO FERRÉ AND ACCENTO DI MARZOTTO's sample sale features well-designed sumptuous threads for men and women at wholesale prices. Coming directly from Italy: men's suits, retail \$950, here \$395; Ferré Studio silk blouses, retail \$375, here \$149; Accento wool coats for women, retail \$750, here \$199; Ferré Studio leather skirts, retail \$525, here \$199. *Gianfranco Ferré*, 632 Broadway, near Bleecker St.

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Ondine Cohane, *New York Magazine*, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

(533-7724); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sun. 10-8; through 1/24.

Loosened Strand

THE STRAND BOOK STORE—ONE OF NEW York's most beloved bargain landmarks (as well as a place to browse endlessly for a rare find)—is encouraging post-holiday shopping with its sales. Stock runs the gamut: *The Dean & DeLuca Cookbook*, published at \$35, here \$19.95; *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*, published at \$225, here \$168.75; *Valley of the Dolls*, published at \$12, now \$8.95. There are also more than a hundred 1998 calendars and desk diaries, including: Edward Gorey desk diary, retail \$16.95, here \$5.95; Robert Mapplethorpe calendar, retail \$12.95, here \$4.95. *Strand Book Store*, 828 Broadway, at 12th St. (473-1452); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Mon.-Sat. 9:30-9:30, Sun. 11-9:30; 12/29 until supplies run out.

One on One

THERE ARE TWO SITUATIONS IN WHICH having a personal trainer is particularly appropriate. The first is when you haven't been able to start working out on your own and need some inspiration—having someone force you helps. The second is when you are in shape but want to get to another fitness level, to become more toned, to train for a race. For both, PEx is offering an incentive to try personal training: fitness assessment, was \$125, now \$75; if you buy a series of ten personal-training sessions (\$60 apiece),

Scrub down: All Caswell-Massey soaps—including jasmine, black currant, and apricot—are on sale for \$2 (were \$4-\$4.50). 518 Lexington Ave., at 48th St. (755-2254); and 155 Spring St. (219-3661); while supplies last.



Photograph by Steve Wisbauer.

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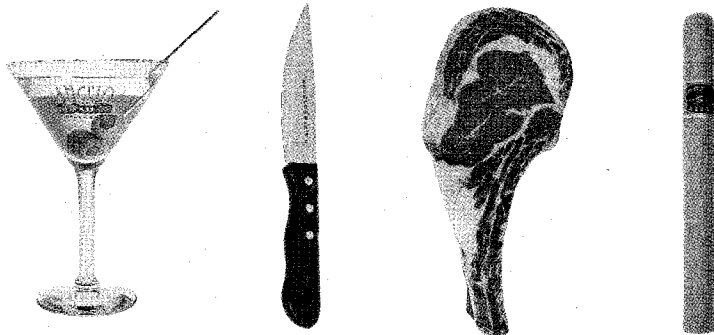
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you get two sessions free (value is \$120). *PEX Personalized Exercise*, 924 Broadway, between 21st and 22nd Sts., third floor (254-1915); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Mon.-Sat. by appointment; 1/1-1/31.

Art Dealer

STORES CONNECTED TO MUSEUMS ALWAYS command a certain cachet—conventional items seem as though they should have a story because of their proximity to art. At the Whitney Museum Store sale, however, the theme this year is more practical than erudite. For example, assorted Pendleton blankets, were \$180, now \$100; Akari's Noguchi lamps, were \$140-\$160, now \$80. *Whitney Museum Store*, 943 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (606-0200); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Tues.-Sun. 11-6, Thurs. until 8; 1/2 until supplies run out.

East Meets Southwest

FOR THOSE WITH A PENCHANT FOR NATIVE American jewelry, David Saity's is the store to visit (witness the large number of fashion spreads from heavy-hitting glossy mags that use his stuff). Included in his January sale: Navajo coral-stone necklace, was \$1,400, now \$850; Navajo shadow box, was \$650, now \$300; turquoise-and-silver earrings, were \$850, now \$480. *David Saity Jewelry*, 450 Park Ave., near 57th St. (223-8125); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 10-6; 1/2-1/26.

Cheap Cuts

HAIRCUTS AT LA COUPE WILL NEVER COST the bundle that some of the more high-maintenance joints in town charge. And \$17 gets you a good cut there (men or women; no appointment necessary). Now it's even harder to pass up this deal; after a cut there, you get a coupon that makes the next one free. *La Coupe*, 2200 Broadway, at 78th St. (579-6959); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 8-11, Sat. 9-11, Sun. 10-10; through 1/31.

Kay Couture

BOK KAY, A WOMAN WHO HAS OWNED HER small store on the Upper East Side for 21 years, is putting her merchandise on sale for the month of January. For example, beaded evening dresses, were \$3,000, now \$800; Italian-made suits, were \$1,100, now \$550; silk blouses, were \$260, now \$130. *Bok Kay Couture*, 1048 Lexington Ave., near 75th St. (737-8577); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 11-6; 1/2-1/31.

MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Just Buddha-ful

Scorsese's 'Kundun' is gorgeously shot and utterly respectful of the story of the fourteenth Dalai Lama, but it's dramatically inert.

MARTIN SCORSESE SETS A MOOD of innocence and calm right at the beginning of *Kundun*. In Tibet, in 1937, after the thirteenth Dalai Lama has died, a holy man is looking for a little boy who will grow into the next living spirit of Buddha. He finds such a boy in a small mountain village; the child's parents think their 2½-year-old son is special—his birth was attended by mysterious happenings, and he definitely has a way about him, both self-possessed and gentle. The mood is rapt, tranquil; Scorsese conveys the charm of intelligent people who live by a sense of wonder. As the holy man poses a series of questions, there's a suggestion that the child may be faking—that the eager monk has planted the idea of specialness in the boy's head, and that he's living up to the role. But it's just a suggestion, quickly dispelled, and it becomes clear before long that this boy, as he grows into a teenager, has a spiritual calling. *Kundun*, the monks call him—he is Tenzin Gyatso (Tenzin Thuthob Tsarong), the fourteenth Dalai Lama, the leader of the Tibetan people. The movie was shot in Morocco and cast with Tibetans living in exile—not trained actors but people apparently so disciplined that they can express what they are feeling through the simplest and most modest of means.

Unlike the fatuous, conventional *Seven Years in Tibet*, this movie has been made with love. It has an assured beauty and an exquisite formality that honor the subject. Roger Deakins's camera moves easily across the mountains and through the sets designed to reproduce a famous temple in Lhasa. And yet, lovely as it is, *Kundun* is of very little dramatic interest—it's an extremely beautiful, boring movie. The boy grows into a gracious and modest young man, a man not always sure that he's up to the role of leader; but still, he has no great spiritual crisis, no awful time of testing, and everyone in Lhasa gathers around and tutors and protects him. It may seem odd to Westerners that Tibetans recognize this teenager as Buddha's representative and, at the same time, instruct and correct him as if he were an ordinary young man, but it's part of the meaning of the film. Spiritual grace is something given, something inherent; the boy matures into the near-divinity that was there inside him from the beginning. The raw edges and tumult of Scorsese's *Last Temptation of Christ*—the striving and torment of a Jesus who was always in doubt—are nowhere in sight. Approaching an alien tradition, Scorsese is entirely respectful, and the respectfulness dulls out the movie.

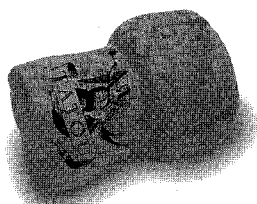


There are recurring images of great contemplative beauty—the mountain peaks, the sand sculpture with colored grains being dropped to form a picture. Philip Glass's music, with its repeated, chantlike figures, complements the stunning but placid images. But what, I wonder, can any director do with the subject of Buddhism and the Chinese invasion of Tibet? This nonviolent, religious country gets assaulted by a totalitarian dictatorship eager to extirpate religion. A slimy, patronizing Chairman Mao tells the Dalai Lama that "religion is poison" and proceeds to destroy a good part of Tibet's heritage and culture. Except in a few of the Dalai Lama's dreams, Scorsese won't show the torment and death brought on by the Chinese. "They have taken away our silence," one of the monks observes, in reproof of the insistent Communist people's-chorus music suddenly blaring everywhere in Tibet. It is the most aggressive remark made by any of the Tibetans.

Not many of us are likely to respond the way we are clearly meant to respond—with deep satisfaction that the Tibetans maintained their dignity and emerged as the spiritual victors in their struggle with the Chinese. The elements of hope in this movie look rather wistful, even wan. As Orwell said, nonviolence worked for Gandhi because the British had a conscience to appeal to; it wouldn't have worked against the Nazis or the Japanese in World War II—and it didn't work against the Chinese Communists in Tibet. I can't escape the feeling that Buddhism is an impossible subject for the

Top of the world: The young Dalai Lama (Tenzin Thuthob Tsarong, left) fleeing Tibet.

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movies. After all, great movie characters are men of overbearing will—Charles Foster Kane, or Vito and Michael Corleone, or Scorsese's Jake La Motta—not characters who *renounce* will.

Jackie Brown, QUENTIN TARANTINO'S first full-length film since the revolutionary *Pulp Fiction*, turns out to be not revolutionary or even evolutionary but enormously . . . methodical. Working from an Elmore Leonard novel, Tarantino has created a gangster fiction that is never larger than life and sometimes smaller. The movie doesn't so much dramatize the characters as tail them. They come; they go; they meet and talk; they talk again; and finally someone gets shot. Yet *Jackie Brown*, despite its termitelike pace and thoroughness, is not dull; Tarantino is an entertainer, and he's written some scandalously funny lines for Samuel L. Jackson, who plays one Ordell Robbie, an egotistical L.A. gun seller. Ordell wears a full ponytail and a little wispy goatee in Chinese-sage style. In the world of taciturn thugs, this hipster-dandy is a brilliant talker; he's also a mean and dangerous man. Ordell keeps a number of people in his employ, including a libidinous white surfer girl (Bridget Fonda) who sits around getting stoned; a mangy ex-con (Robert De Niro); and a stewardess, Jackie Brown (Pam Grier), who carries cash for Ordell back and forth between Los Angeles and Mexico. Jackie is a tough black woman in her forties; she knows the ropes. The movie is about her attempt to break free of Ordell and fleece him of his money.

Tarantino shows off the lowlife egomania, the endless cadging, cheating, double-crossing. *Jackie Brown* is often funny (in a squalid way), but it's generally unexciting, and it lacks the shocks and aesthetic daring of *Pulp Fiction*. People expecting something ambitious from Tarantino—people who see him as some kind of savior—will be amazed and disappointed by *Jackie Brown*, which feels like a conscious regression. The picture is actually an elongated and ambitious B-movie—a dogged homage to the kind of atmospheric minor crime picture that Tarantino, having grown up in a video store, enjoys more than he does prestige movies. In *Jackie Brown*, Tarantino has tried to make the most serious and detailed B movie ever. That attempt has caught him in certain contradictions. He has built the movie around Pam Grier, the strapping, bodice-spilling star of such early-seventies black exploitation movies as *Coffy* and *Foxy Brown*. Tarantino has often expressed his admiration for Grier, and in *Jackie Brown* she does seem a terrifically smart and likable woman. Yet she's a limited performer, and she can't really bloom in the realistic, matter-of-fact framework that Tarantino

has constructed for her. Revived and made the center of a movie, she holds on to her dignity as if it were a life raft, and the performance doesn't go anywhere.

Grier has only a scene or two with the volatile, profane Samuel L. Jackson, who jostles her and would have drawn her out if they had butted heads more often. Most of the time, Tarantino pairs her with another B-movie actor, the somber, stone-faced Robert Forster, who was in *Medium Cool* in 1969 and has worked in obscure movies ever since. Forster plays a tough, experienced bail-bondsman, Max Cherry, who does business for Ordell. In his late fifties, Max is too set in his ways to make a pass at Jackie, but he admires her and possibly even loves her. He's like a wall, this Max, smart but quiet and self-contained, and when Forster acts with Grier—the scenes are mostly long conversations—we realize what Tarantino is getting at. These two actors, sitting across a table in some dim bar, don't open anything up; they're not particularly expressive. But they're not cheap or flashy either; their strength lies in a kind of impervious power, and it's possible that their very lack of range and flexibility seems a form of integrity for Tarantino. He lets Samuel L. Jackson run free, but he treats De Niro and Fonda like B-movie actors, too—each of them plays a type, with only limited consciousness, clinging to a little bit of psychological turf. Perhaps Tarantino is saying that this is what people in the crime world are really like—sly, mean, and limited. They make mistakes, and they die with barely a flicker of awareness of what's happening to them.

At one point, Jackie, trying to steal Ordell's money, is telling one story to Ordell, another to Max, and still another to a federal agent (Michael Keaton) who's trying to destroy Ordell. The plot is enormously complicated, and Tarantino wants us to see what's at stake for each person at each moment. *Jackie Brown* never speeds up; it never explodes. At the climax, in fact, it slows down: Tarantino shows us the same sequence of events three times consecutively, each time from the point of view of a different character. But he does it only to keep things clear. After the formal bravura of *Pulp Fiction*, it's as if he were saying, "Look, no tricks; everything is exactly as it seems." So it may turn out that Quentin Tarantino is not, after all, the American Godard, not a mall-rat pop genius eager to transform pulp into formally demanding art. He really likes pulp for its stiff, repetitive, bullheaded qualities. He likes it so much, he's made his own sober version of it.

David Denby's 1997 reviews are available at newyorkmag.com, along with movie news, a schedule of upcoming openings, and more.

The Old Couple

Neil Simon's *'The Sunshine Boys,'* with Klugman and Randall,
scores by hitting the comic basics—insults, old age, New Jersey.

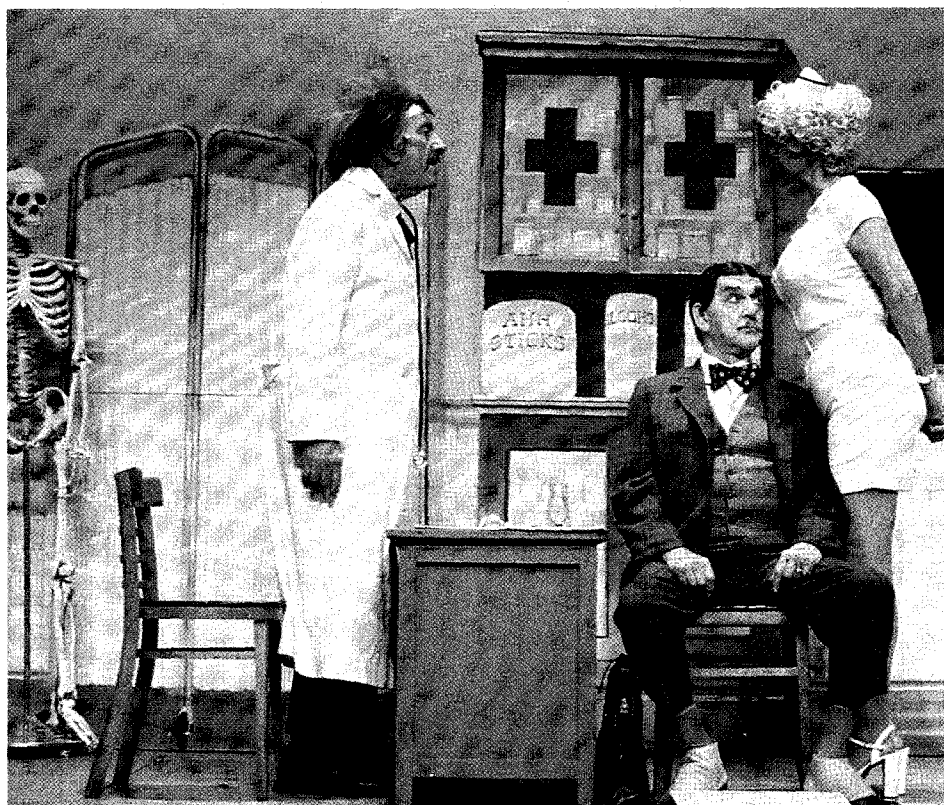
NEIL SIMON'S *The Sunshine Boys* IS A TRIUMPH OF strategy. (1) It is full of one-liners: easily detachable and portable laughs. (2) The main characters, a retired vaudeville team, now hate each other, hence ever-popular insult comedy. (3) Willie Clark and Al Lewis are also Jewish, so we get audience-tickling Jewish jokes. (4) The background is show business, providing cherished showbiz humor. (5) A play about old croakers will capture Broadway's senescent regulars. (6) Big Apple-vs.-New Jersey jests draw in the trans-Hudsonians. (7) As ex-vaudevillians, Willie and Al generate nostalgia for a vanished world. Add the stage-screen-and-TV-enshrined duo of Jack Klugman (Willie) and Tony Randall (Al), and it's platinum-edged securities time.

If after this you expect a royal roasting, I am sorry to disappoint you: *The Sunshine Boys* in the National Actors Theatre revival is still rattling good fun. Foolproof ingredients are no gourmet guarantee. But chef Simon, in top form, knew the right proportions, the appropriate oven temperature, and correct cooking time. What comes out is, despite the suspect something-for-everyone formula, palatable enough to forgo even the missing sweetener of romance. There is no love interest here, but the old-timers' mutual love-hate amply makes up for it.

Willie, in whose dingy upper-Broadway hotel apartment most of the action is laid, has a precarious heart but indomitable bile. In his permanent attire of rumpled pajamas, he sees no need to venture outside. His windows encompass most of his world; for the rest, there is the weekly *Variety* that his nephew, Ben, delivers punctually every Wednesday along with a week's provender. Spiritual sustenance comes from the unquenchable rancor against Al, his partner for 43 years in an act Willie broke up 11 years ago, rounded out with some general misanthropy.

Now CBS wants to do a History of Comedy show, for which the famous doctor-and-tax-collector skit of Lewis and Clark (note the historic names!) is a must. To that end, Ben, who is an agent, proposes to reunite the warring comics. He concentrates on his uncle, the more intractable of the two. This provides a finely honed battle of wits, and be it said forthwith that Matthew Arkin gives a thoroughly endearing performance as the Sisypheanly laboring peacemaker. And just when the potential of the Willie-Ben contest is squeezed dry, Al appears, and the laughter shifts into even higher gear.

In Act Two, we get the fraught rehearsal for the celebrated skit, and a renewal of Willie's grievances: that Al deliberately uses words beginning in *t*, the better to spit at him, while also poking him black-and-blue with a relentless index finger. Al, in turn, fumes about Willie's spitefully changing their classic opening line from "Come in!" to "Enter!" (Incidentally, *enter* lacks the *k* sound that *come* has: according to the play, all funny words contain a *k*.) The rehearsal ends in disaster—sorry, calamity—but enough plot summary: *The Sunshine Boys* warms you even with its afterglow.



James Noone has designed a winning set, finding the poetry in clutter; Noel Taylor's costumes and Kirk Bookman's lighting heighten the high jinks. John Tillinger has directed zestfully, although a coffee-cup-stirring sequence is stretched beyond endurance. Jack Klugman has won his gallant battle with throat cancer: The slight residual croak only adds to his spirited characterization. Tony Randall finally allows his age to show, and this, along with a dandyism nicely contrasting with Willie's slovenliness (a reminder of the pair's chemistry in *The Odd Couple*), is a dandy payoff. Both Peggy Joyce Crosby's big-bosomed fantasy nurse and Ebony Jo-Ann's sardonic real-life one register handsomely. If (continued on page 56)

What is it about a woman in uniform? Only the nurse's assets distract Jack Klugman and Tony Randall from their *Odd Couple*-style fight.

CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

Lost in the Woods

*Juilliard's 'Hänsel und Gretel' can only be described as crummy;
Lincoln Center celebrates Sibelius, Finland's greatest composer.*

ANYONE ATTENDING HUMPERDINCK'S *Hänsel und Gretel* at the Juilliard School and expecting a cheery holiday treat must have received a rude jolt. Both designer Maurice Sendak and director Frank Corsaro have collaborated before on operas with storybook themes—notably Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Oliver Knussen's *Where the Wild Things Are* at the City Opera—and the results were funny-scary in ways guaranteed both to enchant the small fry and to give their parents some unsettling reminders of what being a child really means. This time though, the sights and sounds were rather more grim than Grimm.

Yes, *Hänsel und Gretel* suggests plenty of horrors—murder, child abuse, cannibalism, vandalism—but bring them too far to the surface and we're apt to lose sympathy with the whole milieu. As in many productions nowadays, the wicked witch and the children's mother are shown to be the same woman, although depicting mother Gertrud as a flask-swigging alcoholic whose relationship with her broom is suspiciously sexual seems a bit much. There are many other inventions, but few comment effectively on the piece and others are just puzzling: two omnipresent cats, enigmatic forest creatures, children everywhere (do Peter and Gertrud run a woodland orphanage?). Sendak's bold cutout flats and animated animal drawings are, as always, rich with delightful eye-filling details—perhaps too many this time,

Sets by
Maurice Sendak,
performance by
Juilliard's own.

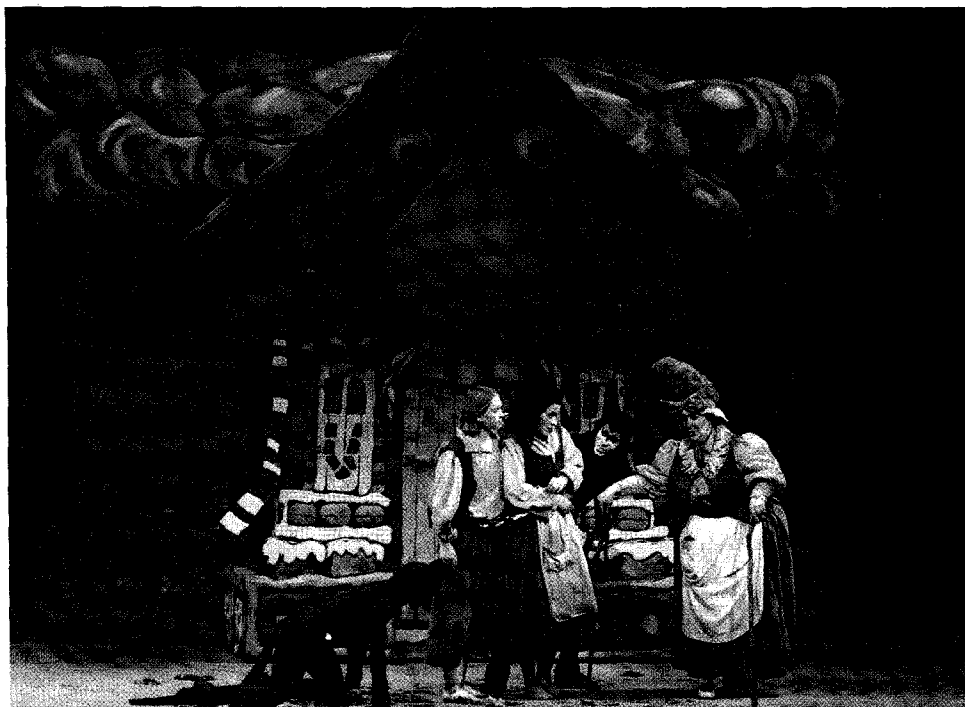
since they threaten to overwhelm the opera.

Possibly a stronger cast would show the production off to better advantage. Since Mariana I. Karpatova as Gertrud-Witch was ailing at the first performance, that key character registered wanly, but her colleagues also lacked distinction, and the orchestra played weakly for Randall Behr. A sore disappointment on the whole, and one that left many of us longing more than ever for a City Opera revival of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, a truly magical Sendak-Corsaro creation.

BACK IN THE LATE FIFTIES, WHEN NEW-MUSIC AGENDAS WERE being drawn up and vigorously promoted, certain famous senior composers were regularly accused of impeding the progress of modernism, and one of the most pernicious villains was **Jean Sibelius**. According to my mentors in academia at the time, Sibelius, who died in 1957 at age 91, was a pathetic figure who never responded properly to the forward march of music history as led by Stravinsky and Schoenberg into the twentieth century. Beyond that, his childish obsession with Finnish folklore and nature mysticism made him out to be a hopelessly outdated proponent of musical nationalism or, worse, a cynical audience manipulator. From his bully pulpit at the New York *Herald Tribune*, Virgil Thomson branded Sibelius's music vulgar, self-indulgent, and provincial beyond description, and Thomson's successor, Paul Henry Lang, was just as damning. Both critics probably felt they had to use strong

language since Sibelius was still dangerously popular—back in 1935, in fact, New York concertgoers had selected him as their favorite composer, nosing out even Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, and Mozart.

The invective has died down since then, and Sibelius never really did go away, although only two or three of his seven symphonies, along with the Violin Concerto, a few pop-concert items like *Valse Triste* and *Finlandia*, and a handful of songs, have remained central to the repertory. So the composer, still something of an enigma, is due for reassessment, and earlier this month Lincoln Center enterprisingly took the initiative by presenting a two-week investigation of his work. Colin Davis conducted five symphonies and other orchestral pieces with the London Symphony Orchestra; the Lark String Quartet investigated the chamber music; baritone Jorma Hynninen gave an all-Sibelius song recital; and the contemporary-music group Avanti! performed a program of works by later Finnish composers, all influenced in one way or another (continued on page 56)



TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

The Takeover Artist

A poster boy for nineteenth-century imperialism, the Cecil Rhodes on 'Masterpiece Theatre' is a titan of greed and racial oppression.

WHAT CECIL WANTS IN THE SIX-HOUR MINI-series *Rhodes* ("Masterpiece Theatre," Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, January 4, 5, and 6; 9 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13) is a map of Africa entirely pink, "from Cape Town to Cairo," this most *Lonesome Dove* of Victorian imperialists is fond of explaining through a cloud of cigarette smoke, under a broad-brimmed cowboy hat, behind a Mark Twain-Joseph Stalin mustache, with his Maxim machine guns, his DeBeers diamonds, and his bought missionaries. I say *Lonesome Dove* because what happened to southern Africa in the nineteenth

arms, and Cecil (Martin Shaw) weeps like a Pietà, director David Drury and teleplaywright Antony Thomas are certainly suggesting repressed homosexuality. (Thomas has also written a biography of Rhodes, which Nadine Gordimer likes.) And in one of his affable sermonettes between episodes, Russell Baker suggests the same, while hastening to add that most of Cecil's associates in empire-building did eventually marry women, as if to forestall us from promiscuously theorizing on a relationship between sexual politics and imperialism.

I am personally inclined to blame class more than sex for the geography-gobbling and the skin game. Where else but in the colonies could the sons and daughters of

a pinched middle class get to behave as willfully as aristocrats, with prime acreage, a plantation house, and platoons of servants? Like young Cecil, played here by Martin Shaw's own son Joe, they may get off the boat without much baggage, not even much notion of Anglo-Saxon superiority. But the sheer expanse of what awaits them—horizons on which to graze and gorge; frontier lawlessness; sunsets of scrambled eggs and blood—will inflate the adventuring appetite. If young Cecil was nice to natives, his grown-up and aggrandized Rupert Murdoch sort of self invented the whole idea of "reserves," saw to it that Africans didn't get a decent education, taxed them into servitude, and wrote the first "pass" laws half a century be-



fore apartheid. Talk about pinking the map. He'd name a country after himself, before Zimbabwe. Filmed wholly in South Africa, *Rhodes* features 30 sets, 200 actors, 10,000 extras, and the remarkable Shaw (a Tony-award nominee for *An Ideal Husband*), who, between temper tantrums, glooms his celibate way through the mini-series as if competing with Victoria herself (Margaret Hale) in an Olympics of phlegm. Also on hand are Ken Stott as Barney Barnato, who was in Africa only for the money; Neil Pearson as the bloody-minded Dr. Jameson; and Washington Sixolo as the luckless Matabele king, Lobengula, not to mention many sharpshooting Boers, in quaint stovepipe hats and Solzhenitsyn beards, to remind us that the English also invented the concentration camp. But even a Boys' Club African Western needs distaff spice, for which *Rhodes*

century so closely resembles the history and cinematography of our own American West—from broken treaties with inconvenient indigenous populations to exuberant invasions, gleeful slaughter, and "native reserves"; from "pioneers" in prairie schooners to homesteaders cashing in on the landgrab to mining companies, railroads, and robber barons; from a rhetoric of "civilizing" savages to a Manifest Destiny of master racism. And because Cecil himself, a vicar's son who left England at age 17 for a hole in the ground in Kimberly to earn money for the very first Rhodes scholarship to Oxford, seems to have been bitterly alone most of his 49 years, unless we count the handsome young male secretaries to whom he was passionately devoted.

When one such secretary, Neville Pickering (Raymond Coulthard), dies like a big blond collie in his master's

Empire builder:
Martin Shaw
plays the title
role in *Rhodes*,
a mini-series
about the
conqueror.

will rely on Frances Barber (*Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*) as the Russian princess Radziwill, fresh from causing trouble in St. Petersburg and Berlin, who seeks first to marry Rhodes and then, having of course failed, to blackmail him. He dies as if to spite her. His spite, like his appetite, is as huge as Africa.

IF YOU CAN'T WAIT FOR THE FIFTH SEASON (and twenty-third century) of *Babylon 5*, now transposed to cable, there is a two-hour "prequel," **In the Beginning** (Sunday, January 4; 8 to 10 P.M.; TNT). It is devoted to the galactic war between Earth and the Minbari Federation, whose devastation caused the creation in the first place of the free-port space station for diplomacy and trade, back when it was "our last best hope for peace," before it became "our last best hope for victory." In a long flashback, from the point of view of Londo Mollari (Peter Jurasik) in his dotage as emperor of the Centauri, we meet Bruce Boxleitner's John Sheridan as a hotheaded Cub Scout, Mira Furlan's Delenn as a sort of vestal virgin, Claudia Christian's Ivanova as a coed with bangs, the usual silicon-based Volons, and the usual marsupial Narns.

Fans of J. Michael Straczynski's exceedingly ambitious sci-fi series—*Dune*-like in its competing magics and technologies, its ritual ceremonies and warrior codes; Arthur C. Clarkely in its proliferation of alien forms—will be amused to find out how important Sheridan was before they ever hired him, which only happened in the second season of the show. *Babylon 5* began the resurgence of militarism on prime-time television, a Gulf War gush and glitz of "smart" weaponry and snazzy uniforms. Retrogrades like me will wonder what ever happened to the sly wit and sexy hum of *Alien Nation*.

BECAUSE SATURDAY NIGHTS ON ABC ARE such a shambles, viewers this week get lucky. First up as substitute programming is **Savion Glover's Nu York** (Saturday, January 3; 8 to 9 P.M.; ABC), in which the wonder boy of tap explores our performing multiculturalism from the Brooklyn Bridge all the way to Harlems Spanish and otherwise, with Stevie Wonder, rap star Puff Daddy, gospel singer Kirk Franklin, hip-hoppers, and Ellington freaks. This is immediately followed by a second installment of **Nissan Presents: A Celebration of America's Music** (Saturday, January 3; 9 to 10 P.M.; ABC), by which our host Bill Cosby means jazz, as embodied by Aretha Franklin, Dave Brubeck, Ella Fitzgerald, Thelonious Monk Jr., Nancy Wilson, Al Jarreau, and so on in front of a white-bread Washington, D.C. The noisy and funky Glover is already a national treasure, a Johnny Applefoot planting tap wherever he goes. ■

Simon continued from page 53

old age emerges more droll than vexatious, let's hope that life will take up the challenge and imitate art. That at the ripe old age of a quarter-century the play still crackles with cachinnation (note the *k*'s!) is a hopeful sign.

IN **Mud, River, Stone**, LYNN NOTTAGE HAS come up with a promising situation. In a wilderness hotel somewhere in Africa, a mysterious British businessman, a young African-American tourist couple, a female African welfare worker, and a crazed, half-naked Belgian gone native are taken hostage by the bellhop Joaquim, an ex-soldier reverting to his civil-war past. Bloated with sudden power, Joaquim threatens to shoot any or all of the hostages, meanwhile playing mind games with them. Unfortunately, the dramatic potential drowns in arbitrariness and manipulation.

One man with a pistol cannot keep six others at bay for days on end. What happens when he sleeps? As the only staff member left at the hotel, does Joaquim fetch the needed food? Or who else delivers it? And when a U.N. official, Simone Frick, arrives to arbitrate, why does her plane promptly take off without her, leaving her a hostage as well? Nonsense piles

on nonsense as the author, totally neglectful of logic and logistics, indulges herself in a battle of wits rather too short on wit. When the play begins as a pleasantly zany farce, we go along; but with the onset of forced seriousness comes loss of credibility and interest, and we opt out.

Too bad, because under Roger Rees's lively direction, the work is given a conscientious production. Neil Patel's set makes the most of the small Playwrights Horizons stage, Kaye Voyce's costumes look suitably lived in, and Frances Aronson's lighting is on the beam. The cast is solid, with Paula Newsome, Maduka Steady, and Brian Murray outstanding, and Michael Potts, Oni Faida Lampley, John McAdams not far behind. The good Yugoslav actress Mirjana Jokovic, as Simone, is made to deliver her lines word by word, if not syllable by syllable, presumably to mock the U.N.'s patronizing ways, but it is carried too far.

Even better plays of ideas have no license to kill off the basics. *Mud, River, Stone* makes light of reality without transporting us to realms of poetry, philosophy, or absurdism where this would no longer matter. The awkward shift from comedy to melodrama is also damaging, but worst of all is that in the sphere of ideas it is so eager to inhabit, the play has nothing much to say. That black Africans, white Africans, and visiting African-Americans are not a ménage à trois made in heaven we suspected all along. The revelations we waited for must have lost their way to the hotel in the surrounding jungle. ■

Davis continued from page 54

by their towering father figure. In between, Davis presided over a combination master class and open rehearsal on the Third Symphony at the Juilliard School, and a panel of today's more Sibelius-friendly academics discussed many interesting issues about the man and his music during an all-day symposium.

It was a clever stroke to lead off this "Northern Lights" festival with the Fourth Symphony, the composer's bleakest, most uncompromising statement. Even Sibelius haters didn't quite know what to make of this gritty score when it first appeared in 1911. The music still sounds "modern" to our ears, especially when compared to the glittering late-romantic orchestral tone poems being written at the time by composers like Richard Strauss—while others served gaudy cocktails, Sibelius once scornfully remarked, he offered the world cold, clear water. Even the compositional procedures—the off-center, unresolved harmonic movement and concentrated working out of spare thematic materials—are radically forward-looking, never mind that few contemporary commentators or other composers picked up on them back then. Sibelius never wrote another score quite this challenging, but all his subsequent symphonies spin variations on the singular aspects of the Fourth's self-generating forms and content. It was instructive to be reminded of the ways in which these masterly and original works are related and how they evolved during the first quarter of this century into organic statements that are, as critic Michael Steinberg has pointed out, constantly in conversation with one another.

The seven Sibelius symphonies have always engaged the attention of important conductors over the years, even when the composer was in eclipse. No interpreter of this music today is more persuasive than Colin Davis, and his reputation as an insightful Sibelian is upheld on two integral recordings: with the Boston Symphony for Philips and, most recently, with the London Symphony on RCA. Of course, there are many ways to present Sibelius, from Koussevitzky's throbbingly passionate improvisations to Karajan's icily majestic pronouncements, but few conductors in my experience have shown a more complete grasp of this elusive composer's symphonic thinking than Davis. Not only does he realize the event-to-event progress of each score with startling clarity, but the instrumental colors positively shimmer with a prismatic beauty that draws a listener straight into the heart of Sibelius's special world. New York has just concluded a busy musical year, but few events have been more memorable or thought-provoking than these eloquent London Symphony concerts. ■

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York

Plunging Into New Year's

**New York
Celebrates
1998**

art 68 bars 82 concerts 83 dance 83 kids 87 the mix 84 movies 58
nightlife 79 radio 84 restaurants 72 television 84 theater 64 the written word 84

movies

The Boxer... Cate Blanchett... The Leopard

New Films

Afterglow—Two marriages hit the skids, and, seeking comfort, the unhappy spouses unknowingly swap partners. With Nick Nolte, Julie Christie, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Jonny Lee Miller. (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Regency*.

Alien Resurrection—Sigourney Weaver is back in the gunk again as Ripley, the indefatigable fighter against the dastardly Other Weaver, whose career in movies has been rather peculiar, stoops to pick up oozing white stuff. They are here: "You will die," she informs the other humans. *Alien Resurrection*, the fourth in a series that began in 1979, is a movie of monstrous deaths, monstrous births. Dead 200 years, Ripley is reconstructed by scientists from her DNA, and when she is full-grown, the alien she was carrying inside her when she died in the last movie (remember?) is also ready for life. Scientists extract the creature, which is what they really want—Ripley, it turns out, was

There is some visual excitement early on—steamy corridors in a black spaceship, an exciting underwater sequence. But a franchise becomes a franchise because it delivers certain staple pleasures or shocks, and payoff time comes soon enough in the usual form of dripping, fanged, death's-head creatures with iron teeth ripping through bodies. The movie is fueled by a powerful disgust, but disgust at what? Made-up creatures? Welcome to the movies of the late nineties: rage without purpose, threat without meaning, horror without relief. (Denby; 12/1/97) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Criterion Center; 86th Street East; 84th Street; Movieworld*.

An American Werewolf in Paris—Julie Delpy is a French werewolf whose efforts to stop a more sinister breed are assisted by an American on vacation. With Tom Everett Scott. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Crown Gotham; Embassy 2-4; 86th Street East*.

★**Amistad**—Steven Spielberg has made a stiff but powerful film about an actual revolt aboard a slave ship in 1839 and the constitutional struggle that followed in its wake. The best thing in the movie is very violent indeed, though it's not the revolt itself, which appears right at the beginning of *Amistad*. The Africans slaughter most of the crew, ordering the two Spanish survivors to take them back to Africa. But the Spaniards trick them and steer the *Amistad* north, and the ship is finally intercepted off the coast of Connecticut by the American Navy. Put on trial for murder and piracy, the Africans are defended by abolitionists, who hire a real-estate lawyer, Roger Baldwin (Matthew McConaughey), to try the case. The question arises: Were they born as slaves—on a plantation, say, in the West Indies—or as free men in Africa? Silent until then, Cinque (Djimon Hounsou) finally speaks (through a translator) and recounts the entire tale. The Africans, mostly from the Mende tribe, were kidnapped by

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby. A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

turned as property to Queen Isabella of Spain. The abolitionists, both white (Stellan Skarsgård) and black (Morgan Freeman), see the *Amistad* affair as Armageddon in the New World—the trial of Christian faith, of humanity's right to be saved. Just when *Amistad* is about to perish from nobility, Anthony Hopkins, as John Quincy Adams, saves the day. There are, I suppose, less sensational ways of doing this material, but Spielberg's way is astonishing, and the shock for us lies both in the images themselves and in the realization that we have never really seen this primal American story. By contrast, the comparable passages in *Roots* are no more than genteel. (Denby; 12/15/97) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Coronet; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square*.

Anastasia—The animated adventures of the Romanov princess. Voices by Meg Ryan, John Cusack, and Angela Lansbury. (1 hr. 36 mins.; G) *Chelsea; 59th Street East; Ziegfeld; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; Kingsway; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld*.

The Apostle—Robert Duvall is a Pentecostal preacher hiding from the law and saving souls in this perfectly told story about southern churchgoing life. Written and directed by Duvall; starring Farrah Fawcett, Billy Bob Thornton, and Miranda Richardson. (About 1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *19th Street East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas*.

★**As Good As It Gets**—In one of those coincidences that seem to strike movies now and then like flashes of lightning, *As Good As It Gets*—James L. Brooks's new picture—features a *Titanic*-like scene in which the self-confidence of an unhappy young woman (Helen Hunt) is restored by an artist (Greg Kinnear) drawing her in the nude. Hunt plays Carol, a straight-talking single mother obsessed with the care of her severely asthmatic young son. Carol has neglected herself, and she falls into the one thing in the world that she needs least—a relationship with a matchlessly rude writer, Melvin (Jack Nicholson), who suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder. Among other things, Melvin is incapable of offering a woman a compliment. Ferociously intelligent but mad as a hatter, Melvin needs two bars of soap to wash his hands and hates to be touched or even spoken to. Retreating behind his bulky forehead, Nicholson can play this role as broadly as he wants and get away with it. He pronounces Melvin's bigoted tirades with delighted, vindictive skill. Melvin torments his neighbor in Manhattan—a gay artist (Kinnear)—but the movie, as we can tell early on, is a Scrooge story. The question is not when Melvin will melt but how. Brooks avoids commonplace sentiment by cultivating his idiosyncratic sense of character and a series of unstable moods. He lets the scenes play at length, giving each of the actors plenty of time to develop a mood. Helen Hunt, holding the screen at times in silence, has never seemed more powerfully sane.



Revival Working Girls

In 'Hustling'—the made-for-TV movie starring Lee Remick and Jill Clayburgh—a magazine journalist investigates the state of prostitution in New York. If nothing else, a visual time capsule of the city in gritty 1975. Plays January 2-31 at the Museum of Television & Radio. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

only a "carrier." The men in white coats mutter something about getting "vaccines" from the resurrected alien, but apart from that, we never really know why they bring back an animal that enjoys chewing on the human race. Her features frozen, Weaver gives off a certain sardonic coldness toward the humans—she's disdainful of both the scientists and the scruffy crew of a pirate spaceship (including Winona Ryder) that shows up with additional human "carriers" for the scientists to play with. Sigourney Weaver is an imposing figure (without being an interesting screen actress), and she has some eerie scenes: Ripley the superwoman, facing down the pirate thugs, plays basketball and stops the ball cold with outstretched palm as if her hand were lined with Krazy Glue.

rival tribesmen, kept in a slave fortress off the coast of Sierra Leone, and then taken across the ocean in an illegal Portuguese slaver, the *Tecora*. As Cinque speaks, we see it at last—the voyage, the excruciating transit in the cargo hold known in accounts of the slave trade as "the middle passage." Spielberg stages these scenes with a power that perhaps he alone in film history is capable of. The filmmakers' point of view is that the *Amistad* incident was a central way station between the imperfectly executed Declaration of Independence and the inevitable Civil War. Many of the players are conscious of the significance of the moment. The opportunistic, cunning President Martin Van Buren (Nigel Hawthorne), afraid of losing the South in the coming election, wants the Africans re-

She virtually stares the ridiculous Melvin into becoming a man. A superbly written and acted tear-jerker. (Denby; 12/22-29/97) (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Kingsway.*

★Boogie Nights—*Boogie Nights*, the second feature by 26-year-old writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson (*Hard Eight* arrived earlier this year), is a kind of ragamuffin epic about the San Fernando Valley porn industry. Much of the film is funny and touching, and even rather sweet. It's a good but not great movie—a movie conceived realistically, without falsifying glamour, but without great insight or excitement either. The movie stretches from 1977 to 1984—the disco-and-cocaine period of bell-bottom L.A.—and covers the varying fortunes of a small group of porn actors, filmmakers, and hangers-on gathered under the wing of Jack Horner (Burt Reynolds), an avuncular producer who likes to have people hang out at his house. Horner takes one look at Eddie Adams (Mark Wahlberg), a busboy in a Valley club, and decides that Eddie has got the stuff. He picks up Eddie by using one of his minor actresses, Roller-girl (Heather Graham), who strips down to her skates and jumps on Eddie at Horner's house, while Jack, appraising, watches the show. Mark Wahlberg may have something in his pants, but there's no gleam in his eye. What Wahlberg does best is convey Eddie's desperation. His Eddie wants success and money, but he doesn't desire anyone; he wants other people to desire him. In Wahlberg's scenes with Julianne Moore—who plays Amber Waves, a female porn star—Moore does most of the work. Moore, a great actress, has red, red lips and lambent flesh, yet her eyes are anxious; she's a kind of neurotic siren, always available but frantically unhappy. *Boogie Nights* is made up of many vignettes, and while Anderson is a good observer, he hasn't really shaped the screenplay. The vignettes don't comment on one another. The movie has its giddy moments, but in the end it is peculiarly depressing. Anderson reports on the porn industry, but he doesn't satisfy our curiosity about this pleasure-driven but pleasureless, fascinating but wan way of life. (Denby; 10/20/97) (2 hrs. 37 mins.; R) *Village East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.*

The Boxer—Daniel Day-Lewis is a boxer (and former IRA man) who returns to his Belfast neighborhood after fifteen years in prison. He is, of course, still in love with Emily Watson. Directed by Jim Sheridan. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Beekman.*

Deconstructing Harry—There are some excruciatingly funny moments in Woody Allen's new movie, but scandalously entertaining as parts of it are, the picture still left me in the foulest of foul moods. Ostensibly, it's about a selfish writer, Harry Block (Woody Allen), who travels to his alma mater in order to accept an honorary degree. Harry is at an impasse in both his creative and his personal life, and as he tries to get someone to accompany him on his trip, various women show up and tear into him—he has cheated on them, he has used their experiences with him in his novels and stories, he's a shit, a twerp, a betrayer, and so on. Woody Allen stages the fictional version of various marital events, drawn from Harry's books, and then he shows us the people that the fictions are based on—often very different from the originals. The movie is meant to be a Philip Roth-like comic demonstration of the existentially ambiguous relations between art and life, and much of it is very free in form. I leave to the literal-minded the task of working out the relation between *Deconstructing Harry* and Woody Allen's tangled life. Since Harry is self-serving, dishonest, and weak, the literal-minded may also be induced to see the picture as Woody Allen's mea culpa. But "mea gloria" might be a more proper description. Harry may be an utter dog, but he attracts and disappoints one beautiful young woman after another—and what could be a greater ego blast than that kind of "self-criticism"? Woody Allen has wound up making a fetish of himself, and it's beginning to be embarrassing. Yes, we accept that he has built, over the years, a comic persona onscreen, and we hardly expect that figure to look like Alec Baldwin. Still, it's getting a little creepy to watch a short, pale 61-

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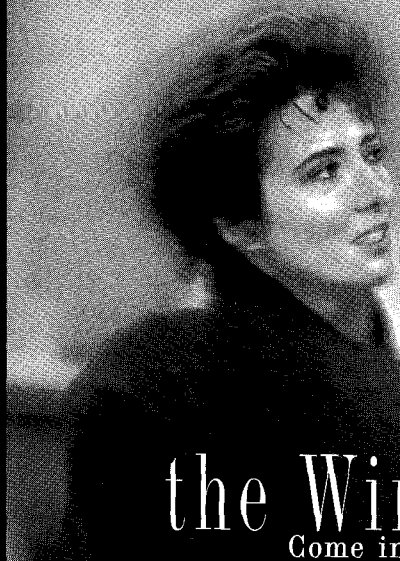
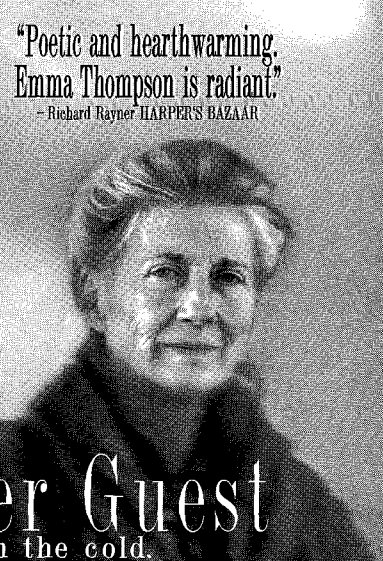
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year-old man kissing (in one movie) Elisabeth Shue, Judy Davis, Hazelle Goodman, Amy Irving, Kirstie Alley, etc., etc. I have nothing against egocentricity, but Allen doesn't seem to realize that he's left the impression that women are drawn to Harry only because his creator is a famous movie director. (Denby; 12/22-29/97) (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Pavilion Theatre.*

Eve's Bayou—A little girl in Louisiana discovers the mix of fact, fiction, and fantasy in her family's lives. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Lynn Whitfield, Diahann Carroll, Branford Marsalis, and Kasi Lemmons. (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema.*

Flubber—Robin Williams stars in an update of 1961's *The Absent Minded Professor*. (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG) *Village East; Chelsea; Guild 50th Street; Sutton; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld.*

For Richer or Poorer—Kirstie Alley and Tim Allen are Manhattanites hiding from the Feds in Amish country. (2 hrs. 2 mins.; PG-13) *Waverly; Chelsea; National Theatre; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Kingsway; Movieworld.*

The Full Monty—Robert Carlyle stars as Gaz, an out-of-work steelworker in Sheffield, England, who rounds up his unemployed friends and persuades them to put together a male strip troupe. Directed by Peter Cattaneo. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★Good Will Hunting—What if an extraordinary mind was put into the body of an orphaned, abused South Boston blue-collar worker, a boy contemptuous of career and status, a boy with a violent streak—even a bit of a thug? Mopping up at M.I.T., Will Hunting (Matt Damon) casually solves problems left on the blackboards, problems intended to stump the best mathematical minds in America. The formidable Professor Lambeau (Stellan Skarsgård), recognizing Will's uncanny talent, takes the boy under his wing, keeping him out of jail by agreeing to get him into therapy. Will lands in the office of Lambeau's old friend and rival Sean McGuire (Robin Williams), a bit of a screw-up himself but perhaps the one shrink in Boston who can understand Will. The boy doesn't want to be "saved." He wants to be left alone. At night, Will and his buddy Chuckie (Ben Affleck) drink with a couple of friends at a neighborhood pub, and the four of them, a white-boy gang—Southies—drive around in an old car, egging one another on to brilliant flights of profanity. People turn themselves inside out trying to help him, but he repels them all. Affleck, Damon, and director Gus Van Sant don't condescend to the Southies, but they don't sentimentalize them, either. This movie has wit and temperament to burn—there isn't a dead scene in it anywhere. In the end, however, the script takes a disastrous turn toward conventionality. What I will always remember is an edge of temper. The film persuades us that genius is of incalculable worth but utter hell to live with. (Denby; 12/8/97) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea West; New York Twin; Lincoln Square.*

Home Alone 3—Young Alex D. Linz steps into Macaulay Culkin's shoes. (1 hr. 50 mins; PG) *Art Greenwich Twin; Chelsea; National Theatre; 86th Street; Gemini; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Movieworld.*

Hugo Pool—Robert Downey Sr. directs Alyssa Milano (Hugo) and his son in this story of a day in the lives of a pool-cleaning family. With Cathy Moriarty, Richard Lewis, Malcolm McDowell, and Sean Penn. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Crown Gotham.*

The Ice Storm—In *The Ice Storm*, the normally protected reaches of New Canaan, Connecticut, are violated by a sinister snapping noise—the sound of frozen power lines falling in a shower of sparks. Where we are, at the bottom circle of Dante's Inferno, where tears turn to ice? No, only in the land of rich, suburban Wasps, where everything is a little weird. The movie is set in the early seventies and two families are falling apart. The husband and father (Kevin Kline) in one of these families, the Hoods, is having a tepid affair with Janey Carver, the wife and mother (Sigourney Weaver) in the other. At the same time, Hood's 14-year-old

daughter, Wendy (Christina Ricci), who likes to expose herself, is fooling around with Janey's two sons (Elijah Wood and Adam Hann-Byrd). Paul Hood, Ben's 16-year-old son, is the narrator. Paul's bemused face and hapless attempts to bed a prep-school girl are, in the performance by Tobey Maguire, about the movie's liveliest elements. For a while, we hope the film will be funny. The Hoods, the Carvers, and their friends would be swingers if only they knew how. At a wife-swapping party, husbands and wives exchange partners without much excitement, the scene acutely observed and unutterably depressing. *The Ice Storm*, perceptive as it is, feels pained and embarrassed. These people are just pathetic; they behave badly, and they don't even get any fun out of it. The actors are a talented group, but they look haltered. One wants to embrace Kline's Ben Hood, but one loses patience with the character, just as one loses patience with his wife, Elena (a masklike Joan Allen), who knows that Ben is straying and expresses her anger in bouts of shoplifting. Why doesn't any of them do something? Or at least say something? Director Ang Lee's touch is very delicate, and the movie's perfection of bleakness offers a refined pleasure (of a sort). But the material doesn't quite play. If, at one end of the spectrum, *The Ice Storm* is like Mazursky without the laughs, at the other it's like Bergman without the anguished brilliance. (Denby; 10/6/97) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

The Jackal—Bruce Willis is a killer for hire and Richard Gere an Irish terrorist with a good heart who tries to stop him from shooting someone very, very important. A master of disguises, Willis wears a variety of bizarre outfits and mustaches, and in one sequence, eager to pick up a gay man in a bar, he dons a blondined wig that makes him look rather cute. These sudden shifts in apparel—

Willis might be a guest on an old TV variety show—are about the only amusement in a pedestrian thriller that does everything by rote. (Denby; 11/24/97) (1 hr. 23 mins.; R) *59th Street East; Criterion Center; Metro Cinema; Kingsway.*

Jackie Brown—See Denby, page 92. (2 hrs. 34 mins.; R) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Embassy 2-4; New Coliseum; Nova; Pavilion Theatre.*

Kundun—See Denby, page 92. (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG) *Area theaters.*

★Mad City—Dustin Hoffman is at the top of his game in Costa Gavras's glum morality tale about the depredations of the media. Hoffman plays Max Brackett, a former big-time TV reporter who has been busted down to a local California station after running afoul of the network's star anchor (Alan Alda). Max is doing a nothing story at a local natural-history museum when a fired employee—Sam Bailey (John Travolta), a guard—barges back into the museum to plead for his job with his ex-boss (Blythe Danner). Hoping to be taken seriously, Sam carries a gun, and when the gun goes off by accident, wounding another guard, and Sam locks the door, shutting in some schoolchildren, Max knows that he's right in the middle of a media gold mine—a hostage situation. What we feel when watching *Mad City* is not so much shock or rage as sorrow. The movie says that television appropriates human tragedy for its own benefit. True enough, though the real problem is that few of us have the strength to turn off the set. (Denby; 11/17/97) (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *Worldwide Cinemas.*

Ma Vie en Rose—The incredibly appealing story of a little boy who thinks he's a little girl and the emotional upheavals this stubborn belief creates among his family and neighbors. Winner of a 1996 César award. (1 hr. 28 mins.; NR) *Area theaters.*

★Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil—Kevin Spacey plays Jim Williams, the real-life Savannah

Talent The Gambler

Given that Australian actress Cate Blanchett is making a name for herself by playing strong, independent types (*Oscar* and *Lucinda's* business-minded heiress; the queen in the upcoming *Elizabeth I*), it's somewhat disconcerting to hear her say, in a quiet voice, that she "stumbled upon" her acting career. But when you learn the full story of Blanchett's stumble—actually, a vocation that called her long ago—it's easy to forgive the modesty. Her first recollection of being on stage, Blanchett says, "was in some shopping mall, when I was about 7." From that point, she appeared in school productions until, at 18, she came face-to-face with adulthood—and decided to become an economics major. "I think acting was something that I was trying to avoid," she says now. "I didn't want it to be my fate. I think I had some vague notion of being involved in international relations in some company somewhere. I don't know how I thought I'd ever get by." She couldn't, so she decided to take a year off and travel around the world on her own ("an Australian rite of passage," she explains). Upon returning to her native Melbourne, she accepted her theatrical destiny and enrolled in the National Institute of Dramatic Art. A steady stream of stage roles followed, leading to movies like *Paradise Road* and *Oscar and Lucinda* (opening December 31). Preparing to play the part of Lucinda—the modern young woman in Peter Carey's Booker Prize-winning novel—meant mastering a skill her career choice had already forced on her: gambling. "They have schools," she says. "Ralph [Fiennes] and I went to a gambling school in Sydney and this man called Conrad with an enormous handlebar mustache taught us to play cards. In the basement of this building. It was so bizarre—people would just sit around all day playing blackjack. It's a completely different world." *Oscar and Lucinda*, she offers, is about "that pull between wanting to be completely reckless and the need to be cautious." She laughs. "I think that's something I related to."

PATRICIA FALVO



Photograph by Philip LeMastrier/Fox Searchlight.

plutocrat and antiques dealer who empties a gun into his nasty young lover (Jude Law) and goes on trial for murder. The movie, adapted from John Berendt's best-seller by screenwriter John Lee Hancock and directed by Clint Eastwood, preserves Berendt's portrait of Savannah as an odd but vibrant moss-hung backwater of the old South. There's nothing vulgar or forced or too explicit in the movie, and he shares and even amplifies Berendt's live-and-let-live manner. *Midnight*, however, suffers from a rare fault: It's a little underpowered and almost too pleased with its own easy affability. We want more concentration, a quickening of the tempo, and more insight. Berendt's autobiographical writer figure has been given a name, John Kelso (John Cusack, charming as always), given a love interest (Alison Eastwood, Clint's appealing daughter), and made more active than the author's modest, recording "I." Kelso arrives with a specific magazine assignment—to write about Jim Williams's famous parties—and once the trial begins, he makes it clear that he's staying to write a book; he even enters into an ethically dubious arrangement with Williams and his lawyer (Jack Thompson) to share his information about the case and even help the defense, in return for access. Berendt gives quite a bit of space to the witty black transvestite Lady Chablis, who has only a marginal connection to Jim Williams and his lover, and Eastwood uses her heavily, too—uses the real Lady Chablis (né Frank Deveau), who has a dynamite figure, arms like blades, and a richly insinuating manner sharp enough to... well, to peel a grape. Lady Chablis grabs at her moment of cinematic glory with upraised talons: Eastwood may have been too amused (or intimidated) by her to shut her off. And, like Berendt, he indulges the black voodoo lady Minerva (Irma P. Hall), who mutters imprecations in the cemetery at night and may or may not affect the outcome of the trial with her charms and spells. I have to admit that in both versions of the material, I found Minerva a bit much. The movie compresses four trials stretching over eight years into a single trial (dominated by Jack Thompson, the superb Australian actor doing an expert imitation of a good ol' boy). In the end, *Midnight* is a meditation on the unknowability of the truth. (Denby; 12/1/97) (2 hrs. 35 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 72nd St. East; Lincoln Square; Movieworld.*

Mortal Kombat: Annihilation—A group of heroes fight off a warlord trying to take over the earth. Starring model-actresses Talisa Soto and Irina Pantaeva. This sequel to *Mortal Kombat* is directed by John Leonetti. (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG-13) *Criterion Center.*

The Mother and the Whore—A re-release of the 1973 post-New Wave epic by Jean Eustache. Starring Jean-Pierre Léaud, Bernadette Lafont, and Françoise Lebrun. (3 hrs. 35 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Mouse Hunt—Nathan Lane and Lee Evans inherit a mansion and square off against a mouse. (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *Waverly; Chelsea; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Pavilion Theatre.*

Mr. Magoo—Leslie Nielsen is the nearsighted millionaire. With Kelly Lynch. (1 hr. 25 mins.; PG) *Village East; Embassy 2-4; Sutton; 86th Street East.*

O Amor Natural—In this funny documentary, writer-director Heddy Honigmann asks elderly Brazilians what they think of the erotic poems of Carlos Drummond de Andrade. (1 hr. 16 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Office Killer—A magazine copy editor loses her cool and starts murdering her dismissive co-workers. Cindy Sherman's directorial debut. (1 hr. 21 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Oscar & Lucinda—Two gamblers—one a man of God and the other an uncommonly independent Australian woman—find that love is the hardest risk to take. Starring Ralph Fiennes and Cate Blanchett. Directed by Gillian Armstrong. Based on the book by Peter Carey. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; R) *Avea theatres.*

The Postman—Kevin Costner brings a post-apocalyptic America together by jump-starting the postal service. (2 hrs. 50 mins.; R) *Murray Hill Cinemas; Coronet; Ziegfeld; Pavilion Theatre.*

★The Rainmaker—Matt Damon is Rudy Baylor, a just-out-of-law-school southern boy, gallant by

instinct, with a streak of natural piety. Rudy is also a lawyer, and therefore it's his business to consort with crooks and sellouts, and in general to work within a corrupt system that favors the wealthy and the powerful. Adapted and directed by Francis Ford Coppola, the film is essentially a David-and-Goliath tale. In Memphis, Rudy and his scapegrace helper, Deck (Danny DeVito), take on a huge insurance company, a crooked outfit that won't pay the claims made by a family with a boy dying of leukemia. It's not exactly a moving target, and unfortunately the picture falls into caricature now and then. The company's CEO is a desiccated moron (Roy Scheider), its chief lawyer (Jon Voight) a beautifully coiffed swine who gives himself away at every turn. Rudy's first employer is a cuff-linked gangster played by a bearded Mickey Rourke with his early modesty and precision. Despite its moral simplicities, the movie is highly watchable. (Denby; 12/8/97) (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; UA East; 62nd and Broadway; Kingsway; Movieworld.*

Scream 2—The sequel to last year's famously clever *Scream*. Starring Neve Campbell and Courtney Cox. (2 hrs. 2 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.*

★The Sweet Hereafter—Atom Egoyan's film is a rarity. Adapted from Russell Banks's 1991 novel devoted to the aftermath of a devastating school-bus accident, the film appears to be a kind of detective story. A big-city lawyer, Mitchell Stephens (Ian Holm), enters a snowy, forlorn town in British Columbia after fourteen children have died and travels about interviewing the parents and survivors, desperate to enlist everyone, including the teenage survivor, Nicole (Sarah Polley), in a grievance suit. As Stephens investigates, we see what led up to the accident—the family life of the town, with its fissures and its secrets, including adultery and a suggestion of incest—and eventually we see the accident itself. The film cuts backward and forward in time, and we expect that Stephens will uncover some amazing circumstance that will explain everything. We experience the accident through the eyes of Billy (Bruce Greenwood), who is driving behind the bus and is the father of two of the children. Billy sees; he's the hero of the movie, an unillusioned man, rejecting avenging lawyers and bad-luck omens in favor of the most bitter reality. His adulterous scenes with Alberta Watson (the mother in David O. Russell's *Spanking the Monkey*) have an acrid intimacy. The actors are all excellent in a plain style that avoids irony, pose, perversity. By the end of the movie, everything comes together—the answer to the detective inquiry is all that is most difficult to face in life. If there were many movies as reality-bound as this one, I think I would go mad. That this one exists, however, is almost a blessing. (Denby; 11/24/97) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

The Tango Lesson—Sally Potter writes, directs, and stars in this way-cerebral story of tango dancing and one woman's obsession with it. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG).

★Titanic—Writer-director James Cameron has pulled it off. This fabulously expensive watery epic is actually a very good movie. *Titanic* begins with a treasure hunter, Brock Lovett (Bill Paxton), who is obsessed with the sunken hulk. Lovett's submersible robot enters one of the deluxe staterooms and retrieves not the famous diamond he was looking for but only a drawing of a naked young woman wearing the stone. It turns out that the woman, Rose, is still alive; she's an articulate 100-year-old beauty (Gloria Stuart) who joins Lovett at his ship and then holds him and his crew of techno-ruffians in thrall with her story of what happened. Back in 1912, the 17-year-old Rose DeWitt Bukater (Kate Winslet) boards the ship in utter misery. Rose is accompanied by her awful fiancé, Cal Hockley (Billy Zane), a domineering steel baron from Pittsburgh, and her snobbish mother (Frances Fisher). Onboard, Rose meets her soul mate, Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio). A gambler, Jack has the wit to see that Rose's unhappiness hides a bold,



Opening Sexy Mothers

In *'O Amor Natural,'* documentary-maker Heddy Honigmann takes the erotica of Brazil's favorite poet (the late Carlos Drummond de Andrade) to the senior citizens of Rio—who then candidly, comically reminisce about their sex lives. Opens Wednesday, December 31, at Film Forum.

deeply romantic and sexual nature. Except for the crude, good-hearted Denver millionairess Molly Brown (Kathy Bates), the wealthy are unspeakably rude or just frightened and starchy. Jack, the interloper, takes Rose down to steerage, where the real people are having themselves a fine time drinking and dancing up a storm. This sort of cheesy stuff is redeemed only by the romantic charge between Winslet and DiCaprio. The sinking is lovely—detailed, agonizingly slow at first and then rushed and panicky and grandly gruesome at the end. As Jack and Rose hang at the railing, people lose their grip and go crashing down the deck or fall from the heights into the water. After the ship goes under, Cameron has his finest, cruelest moment—the survivors left in the vast expanse of freezing water wailing in confusion. As for Rose, she is delivered into an active and brilliant life. The ship may be ponderous, but Cameron's conception stays light in the water. (Denby; 12/22-29/97) (3 hrs. 17 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Astor Plaza; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza.*

Tomorrow Never Dies—Pierce Brosnan is once again 007. (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea West; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Nova; Olympia Theatre; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Plaza.*

Twisted—A loosely adapted version of *Oliver Twist*, set in a gay underworld of New York. Starring the late William Hickey. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Wag the Dog—Robert De Niro and Dustin Hoffman play a spin doctor and a Hollywood producer who create a phony war to distract the American public from its philandering president. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Cinema I, II, Third Ave.*

★Welcome to Sarajevo—This film, which follows the adventures of some Western journalists during the siege of Sarajevo in 1992, is a noble try, but it's a thing of shreds and patches—a mix of documentary footage, acted-out scenes based on true stories, and a general atmosphere of suffering, bravado, and endurance. Written by Frank Cottrell Boyce and directed by Michael Winterbottom (both Brits), it doesn't really work as a movie—there are too many powerful fragments, too many scenes only half developed—but I'm still very glad I saw it. Woody Harrelson is the prime peacock here, a flippant, often drunk, but secretly brave and caring star reporter. Woody and his colleagues—female as well as male—find it hard to leave Sarajevo. Many months go by, and they are still hunkering down at night in the dark hotel, drinking and making mock passes at one another.

er. They have become attached to the city as a cause as well as addicted to their own courage in covering it; they combine daring and egotism in ways that aren't easy to judge. The documentary scenes of massacre and destruction are a lot more powerful on the big screen than they ever were on TV, where they could easily be ignored. In the movie, the journalists covering the story appear to know that, particularly the British TV reporter played by Michael Henderson (based on ITN's Michael Nicholson), a man who wanders through the ravaged city in a bleak, unappeasable rage. Henderson centers his anxieties on some children in an orphanage, covering their story again and again, and when relief help shows up (in the un-



convincing presence of Marisa Tomei), he tries to sneak one 9-year-old girl out as his adopted daughter. In general, the shifts back and forth between documentary and acted scenes aren't very successful. Some of us may find it hard to put up with actors striking resolute poses right after scenes of people lying on the street with their legs blown off. Inevitably, the "upbeat" story of a reporter taking a girl out of hell and relocating her to a sunny, idyllic garden in England strikes us as a sentimentalization of what the documentary camera, in the rest of the movie, can't help seeing—the fabric of life ripped, torn, and almost obliterated. (Denby; 12/1/97) (1 hr. 41 mins.; R).

Will It Snow for Christmas?—A woman and her seven illegitimate children have no money and no man around the house but an abundance of love and a happy ending. Winner of a César for best debut film. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Film Forum*.

★**The Wings of the Dove**—The movie differs from Henry James's novel in a hundred particulars, but the great point is that it works on its own terms, which is all one can ask. At the center, there are two young people who love each other but need money. Kate Croy (Helena Bonham Carter), clever, beautiful, and distinguished, lives in London with her wealthy aunt (Charlotte Rampling), who is determined to marry her off to a rich man and who does what she can to break up Kate's relationship with the charming but penurious young journalist Merton Densher (Linus Roache). We are drawn to Bonham Carter's intelligence, even though her Kate is not brave enough to live with Densher in poverty. Kate plays for the largest stakes; she wants her handsome young man and she wants to be rich, too. By degrees, and without his quite understanding it, Densher gets pulled into a conspiracy that Kate engineers. For there is another young person in their social circle, the fabulously wealthy American heiress Millie Theale (Alison Elliott), who is sweet, generous, and wasting away from some nameless disease. Millie needs a lover; she needs to live. Kate, who genuinely likes her, wants Millie to be happy and to know love—

with Densher, who would then inherit the money, after Millie's death, that would allow Kate to marry him. Kate's motives are mixed, both selfless and selfish, benevolent and sinister, and she corrupts Densher with her provocative ambivalence. Because he's such a splendid fellow, Densher's puzzlement as Kate pushes him into Millie's arms is painful; his anger and sexual aggression as he realizes how he is being used become the dramatic high point of the movie. The complicating factor—Henry James always has a complicating factor—is that Densher falls for Millie; or rather, he falls for her desire to experience everything she can before dying. The filmmakers have aggressively bumped the period ahead from 1902 to 1910; the characters take the subway, smoke cigarettes furiously and attend a gallery exhibit of Klimt's decadent nudes. We get the point: Kate Croy and Merton Densher are modern personalities, rebels against the constrictions of their time. Rebellion is certainly not something that Henry James had in mind, but it's a minor vulgarization. (Denby; 11/10/97) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Beekman; Lincoln Square*.

The Winter Guest—Emma Thompson is a long-grieving widowed photographer who spends a long cold day moving past the tragedy—with help from her aging mother (played by Thompson's real-life mother, Phyllida Law). Directed by Alan Rickman. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Paris Theatre*.

Revival Decline and Fall

MOMA's sold-out screenings of *The Leopard*—Luchino Visconti's epic story of one aristocratic Sicilian family's slow death (starring Burt Lancaster, above, with Claudia Cardinale)—have inspired a return engagement, this time at Cinema Village. The current version of the legendary film (still not available on video) has changed its spots, though: It's about twenty minutes shorter than 1963's three-and-a-half-hour original. Starts January 2.

Manhattan Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Good Will Hunting; The Sweet Hereafter; The Wings of the Dove*.

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Home Alone 3; The Rainmaker*.

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *"Kung Fu Christmas."* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Fast, Cheap & Out of Control; The Mother and the Whore; Will It Snow for Christmas?* Opening 12/31: *O Amor Natural*. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Eve's Bayou; The Full Monty; Hugo Pool; Office Killer; Twisted*.

Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Chasing Amy; Cop Land; She's So Lovely*. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *L.A. Confidential; Alien Resurrection; As Good As It Gets; Boogie Nights; Deconstructing Harry; Flubber; Jackie Brown; Mr. Magoo; The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Amistad; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *For Richer or Poorer; Mouse Hunt*.

14th-41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Amistad; The Apostle; Deconstructing Harry*.

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Alien Resurrection; An American Werewolf in Paris; Anastasia; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; Mouse Hunt; Scream 2; Titanic*.

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Good Will Hunting; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *L.A. Confidential; Amistad; As Good As It Gets; Jackie Brown; The Postman*.

42nd-60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Anastasia; The Jackal*.

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Titanic*.

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Boogie Nights; Deconstructing Harry; Wag the Dog*.

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Amistad; The Postman*.

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Alien Resurrection; Bean; I Know What You Did Last Summer; The Jackal; Mortal Combat; Annihilation; One Night Stand; Starship Troopers*.

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *An American Werewolf in Paris; Hugo Pool*.

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *The Ice Storm*.

Embassy 2-4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *An American Werewolf in Paris; Jackie Brown; Mr. Magoo*.

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Flubber*.

National Theatre—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3*.

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *The Winter Guest*. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *Amistad; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; Scream 2*.

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Flubber; Mr. Magoo*.

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Air Force One; Bean; Fairytale—A True Story; Mad City; Men in Black; Red Corner; Soul Food*.

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Anastasia; The Postman*.

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3*.

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *L.A. Confidential; Alien Resurrection; An American Werewolf in Paris; Mr. Magoo*.

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *The Wings of the Dove*. Opening 12/31: *The Boxer*.

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *For Richer or Poorer; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Devil's Advocate; Home Alone 3; The Man Who Knew Too Little*.

Guggenheim Museum—Fifth Ave. at 88th St. (423-3857). (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *L.A. Confidential; Good Will Hunting*.

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *Amistad; Flubber; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *The Rainmaker*.

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *The Rainmaker*.

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Alien Resurrection; Anastasia; Mouse Hunt; Scream 2; Tomorrow Never Dies*.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *The Apostle; Deconstructing Harry; The Full Monty; The Ice Storm; The Sweet Hereafter*.

Photograph courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox.

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) L.A. Confidential; Amistad; As Good As It Gets; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Good Will Hunting; Home Alone 3; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; Titanic; The Wings of the Dove. IMAX: Nutcracker; Across the Sea of Time; Four Million House Guests; Titanic.

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) Anastasia; As Good As It Gets; Flubber; The Jackal.

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) Home Alone 3; Jackie Brown; Mouse Hunt; Titanic.

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) Jackie Brown; Mouse Hunt; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) Afterglow.

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) Amistad; Flubber; Home Alone 3; Mouse Hunt; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) Amistad; Anastasia; Flubber; Mouse Hunt; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) Alien Resurrection; Amistad; Anastasia; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation; Mouse Hunt; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) Anastasia; As Good As It Gets; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; The Jackal; Mouse Hunt; Titanic.

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) Amistad; Mouse Hunt; Titanic.

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) Amistad; As Good As It Gets; Good Will Hunting; Mouse Hunt; The Postman; The Wings of the Dove.

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) Jackie Brown; Mr. Magoo; Scream 2; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) An American Werewolf in Paris; Jackie Brown; Scream 2; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) Home Alone 3; Mouse Hunt; Titanic.

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) An American Werewolf in Paris; Amistad; Home Alone 3; Jackie Brown; Scream 2; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) Anastasia; As Good As It Gets; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; The Jackal; The Rainmaker; Titanic.

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) Alien Resurrection; Bean; Home Alone 3; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation.

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West (369-0838) Deconstructing Harry; Flubber; Home Alone 3; Jackie Brown; Mouse Hunt; The Postman; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) An American Werewolf in Paris; Home Alone 3; Mouse Hunt; Mr. Magoo; Tomorrow Never Dies.

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) Alien Resurrection; Anastasia; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; The Jackal; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation; The Rainmaker; Scream 2.

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) Alien Resurrection; Devil's Advocate; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; The Jackal; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation; The Rainmaker.

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bay-side (428-4040) L.A. Confidential; Alien Resurrec-

tion; Flubber; Scream 2; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) Flubber; Home Alone 3; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) An American Werewolf in Paris; Amistad; Anastasia; Jackie Brown; The Postman; The Rainmaker; Scream 2.

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) Amistad; Flubber; Home Alone 3; Mr. Magoo; The Rainmaker; Titanic.

Continental—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) Alien Resurrection; The Jackal; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil.

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) Alien Resurrection; Scream 2.

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) Anastasia; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; I Know What You Did Last Summer; The Jackal; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation.

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) Flubber; Scream 2; Titanic.

Forest Hills—107-16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) Anastasia; For Richer or Poorer.

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) An American Werewolf in Paris; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) An American Werewolf in Paris; Flubber; Scream 2; Titanic.

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) Anastasia; Flubber; Scream 2; The Rocky Horror Picture Show; Titanic.

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) Closed for renovations.

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) Alien Resurrection; Anastasia; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; The Rainmaker.

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) The Rainmaker; The Wings of the Dove.

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Quartet—160-06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) Alien Resurrection; I Know What You Did Last Summer; The Jackal; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation; Scream 2.

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) Anastasia; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; The Rainmaker.

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) The Wings of the Dove.

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) As Good As It Gets; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; Mouse Hunt; The Postman; Scream 2; Titanic; Tomorrow Never Dies.

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) Alien Resurrection; Flubber; The Rainmaker; Scream 2.

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) Alien Resurrection; Anastasia; Devil's Advocate; Flubber; For Richer or Poorer; Home Alone 3; The Jackal; Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil; Mortal Kombat: Annihilation; The Rainmaker; Scream 2.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Animated Christmas." Through 1/2: A Christmas Carol

(1972), How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1966), The Simpsons Christmas Special (1990), Mickey's Christmas Carol (1983), Nightmare Before Christmas (1993), The Night Before Christmas (1933), Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer (1964), Simple Gifts (1978), The Snow Queen (1957), and The Snowman (1983). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); \$12-\$15 nonmembers; \$8-\$10 members; \$4 ages 5-18.

Different Light—1/4: Rain (1932). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Film Forum—"Chaplin." 12/31: Chaplin at Mutual Parts I and II (1917). 1/1-1/3: The Gold Rush (1925) and The Great Dictator (1940). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); \$8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"French Movies Go on the Road." 12/30: Pepe le Moko (1936) and The Walls of Malapaga (1949). 12/31: The Story of Adele H. (1975) and The Proud Ones (1953). 1/1: Wages of Fear (1953). 1/2-1/3: The Scent of Green Papaya (1993) and India Song (1975). 1/4: L'Atlantide (1921). 1/5-1/6: Le Grand Jeu (1934) and Two Men in Manhattan (1958). "Movies for Kids." 12/3-12/4: Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (1971). Call 875-5601 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); \$8.50.

Kung Fu Christmas—Through 1/1: "Ten Kung Fu Classics From Hong Kong." Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363); \$8.

Museum of Modern Art—"The Billy Rose Tribute to Ingrid Bergman." 12/30: Casablanca (1942) and Friends for Life (1955). 1/1: The Bells of St. Mary's (1945). 1/1 and 1/3: June Night (1941). 1/2-1/3: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1941). 1/2 and 1/4: Anastasia (1956) and Gaslight (1944). 1/5-1/6: Dollar (1938) and Only One Night (1939). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with \$9.50 admission.

Museum of Television & Radio—"TV Movies." Month of December: Love Among the Ruins (1972). Month of January: Hustling (1975). 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6600); \$6.

Screening Room—Sunday brunch: Casablanca (1942) and Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961). 54 Varick St., below Canal St. (334-2100); \$8 (\$5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 1/3-1/4: The Only Son (1936). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); \$5 members, \$6 nonmembers.

Opening Love Among the Ruins

In 'The Boxer,' Daniel Day-Lewis (below, with Emily Watson) is a former IRA member who returns home after fifteen years in jail to find his Belfast neighborhood still locked in a feud he wants no part of—and his girl still bound by it. Opens Wednesday, December 31.



Photograph by Frank Connor/Universal Studios.

theater

70 Hill Lane...The School for Scandal

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Capeman—Paul Simon's painstakingly crafted and vigorously ballyhooed new musical finally arrives. The score—a cross-fertilization of salsa, rock, doo-wop, and gospel tunes—features more than 30 songs; the story, based on one of the most sensational double murders in New York history, is one of redemption, following Salvador Agron, the perp, for more than 30 years of his uncommon life, as he metamorphoses from gang tough to poet. Book by Nobel Prize-winning poet Derek Walcott, direction and choreography by Mark Morris, and star turns by Ruben Blades and Marc Anthony. \$50–\$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 1/8 opening. *Marquis Theater, 211 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Ragtime—If the buzz from L.A. and Toronto is to be trusted, this musical, adapted from E. L. Doctorow's historical novel by playwright Terrence McNally and composer-lyricist team Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, will raise goosebumps and root itself in the brain. The story intertwines the fates of a black man, an immigrant, and a complacent family of Wasps, as well as an assortment of historical characters ranging from Harry Houdini to Emma Goldman. \$31–\$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 1/18 opening. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Now Playing

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Deborah Gibson plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. Lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. \$22.50–\$70. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing. \$20–\$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200).* 2 hrs.

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. \$37.50–\$65. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200).* 2 hrs. 30 mins.

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness. Minimalism prevails. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. If *Chicago* in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Marilu Henner, Hinton Battle, and Joel Grey. (Simon: 12/2/96).

\$20–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200).* 2 hrs. 30 mins.

The Diary of Anne Frank—Natalie Portman, the electrifying teen cutie from *Beautiful Girls*, stars in this newly adapted version of the 1955 play. Also starring Linda Lavin, Harris Yulin, George Hearn, and Austin Pendleton. \$40–\$60. Tues. at 8, Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Fri. and Sun. at 3. Opened 12/4/97. *Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

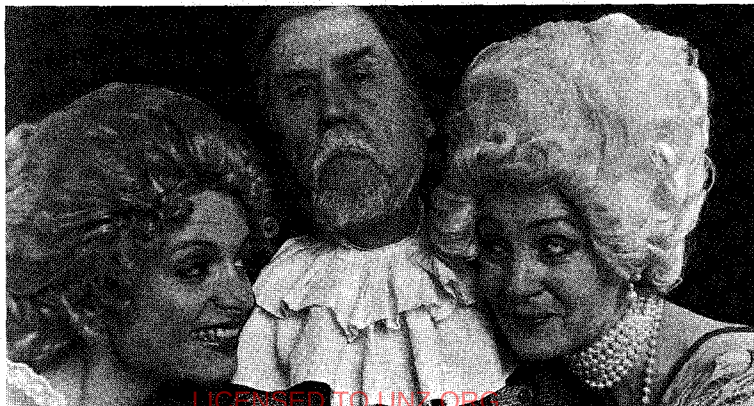
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring Bob Amaral as Pseudolus. \$60–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Closes 1/4. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200).* 2 hrs. 20 mins.

Grease!—A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. Linda Blair plays Betty Rizzo. \$30–\$67.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 6. Opened: 5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

Ivanov—With Kevin Kline and the rest going for it, this Chekhov drama is a winner: wasted lives have seldom been caught so completely and compellingly and, yes, pulsatingly. Kline's performance is microscopic enough to reveal undreamt-of details to the naked eye and ear, telescopic enough to

Opening Idol Gossip

In 'The Rivals,' Richard Brinsley Sheridan gave us the character of Mrs. Malaprop, whose chronic misapprehensions of the English language spawned the enduring term 'malapropism.' But in 'The School for Scandal,' a send-up of rumor traffickers and careless whisperers, he bequeathed us one of the most titillating social satires committed to paper. Pearl Theatre Company's revival of the 1777 comedy opens December 29.



Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

bringing the farthest generalities into close focus. Most of the large cast is on target. David Hare's adaptation could not be more vividly actable, with not an awkward moment anywhere. That painterly and musical director Gerald Gutierrez has orchestrated both visually and aurally, finding ingenious compositions for both our sight and hearing. (Simon: 12/1/97). \$40–\$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/20/97. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Jackie: An American Life—As ominously titled as it is, this isn't a serious play. It isn't even a straight biography, though Gip Hoppe, the author, manages to cram in historical events both great and small. Instead, it relies on whimsical devices to convey some ideas about the nature of the First Lady's celebrity (the Rat Pack? LBJ? Joe Kennedy?—all puppets) and revels in portraits of the mundane. Margaret Colin stars. \$45–\$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/10/97. *Belasco Theater, 111 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, score by Frank Wildhorn. \$45–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The King and I—The Rodgers and Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam*, featuring Kevin Gray, a former phantom from *Phantom*, in the role created by Yul Brynner. Marie Osmond stars as Anna. \$25–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theater, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100).* 2 hrs. 45 mins.

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—This romantic comedy, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind*, is Alfred Uhry's first effort since *Driving Miss Daisy*. The wait clearly paid off; he won the 1997 Tony award for Best Play. \$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97.

Helen Hayes Theater, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiens bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cossetting their own daughter, Epoumine—what a story! Just synthesizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97).

Photograph by Tom Bloom.

\$15-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Lillias White and Chuck Cooper just picked up Tony awards for their performances. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. \$40-\$75. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/26/97. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen *Lion King* onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). \$20-\$80. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, will next week become one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Score by Claude-Michel Schönberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. \$15-\$75. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theatre, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Old Neighborhood—Three interconnected one-act plays by David Mamet, starring Peter Riegert, Patti LuPone, Vincent Guastaferrro, Rebecca Pidgeon, and Jack Willis. Directed by Scott Zigler. \$45-\$55. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 11/19/97. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

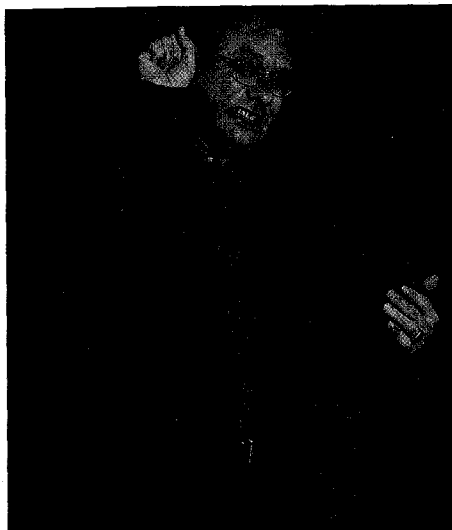
The Phantom of the Opera—Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, recently edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. \$15-\$75. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Proposals—It wouldn't be a new Broadway season without a Neil Simon comedy. This one varies from its predecessors, however, in that (a) it's set outdoors, (b) young people make up over half the *dramatis personae*, and (c) Joe Mantello, who is not Gene Saks, directs. \$35-\$60. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/6/97. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200)*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village. \$30-\$67.50. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—You've seen the billboard. Now come see the show. It's got romance, suspense, swashbuckling, and a whole bunch of eighteenth-century stuff; if it succeeds, Broadway could well be on its way to becoming a French Revolution theme park. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton adapted Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Christine Andreas, Terrence Mann, and Douglas Sils star. \$20-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/9/97. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

1776—The book of this 1969 musical, the gifted Peter Stone's masterpiece, is surely one of the best ever. Thrillingly incorporating the potentially divisive issue of slavery, it succeeds in keeping us, despite our knowledge of the outcome, in a state of wonderfully paradoxical suspense. Splendid as was Peter Hunt's original production, this Scott Ellis revival very nearly matches it. It will provide you not only with three hours of choice theatergoing, but also with three very rich hours of life. Music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. (Simon: 8/25/97). \$20-\$75. Wed.-Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2; Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100).*



Side Show—The story of the English-born Siamese twins Daisy and Violet Hilton, who during the twenties and thirties went from a freak show to vaudeville fame, has many tragic elements, and this new Broadway musical tries to tackle them. But musical comedy perforce has problems with tragedy, and this show is no exception. Yet when you tally up its credits and debits, you end up, if not exactly in the black, at least in a becoming Oxford gray. There are enough good songs by Henry Krieger to make the weak ones overlookable. The cast carries the show with panache and poignance. Alice Ripley (Violet) and Emily Skinner (Daisy) act, sing, and dance compellingly, getting every requisite laugh and tear. (Simon: 10/27/97). \$45-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 10/16/97. *Richard Rodgers Theater, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. \$65-\$75. *At the Virginia Theater, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)? Uh-huh. 2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Street Corner Symphony—The seventies, a decade that increasingly seems better suited to art than to life, comes roaring back in this revue of soul, pop, and disco ditties. Period costume and dances accompany each number. *Get down.* Conceived and staged by Marion J. Caffey. \$47.50-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/24/97. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Sunshine Boys—The last time Jack Klugman and Tony Randall appeared onstage together—in the National Actors Theatre's *Three Men on a Horse*—they were scolded by critics for not choosing a more age-appropriate play. Now, as a pair of retired vaudevillians in one of Neil Simon's most cherished comedies, they have a chance to make amends. \$20-\$60. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 12/8/97. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and Lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. \$45-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Triumph of Love—It's the Broadway musical-theater debut for F. Murray Abraham, an eagerly awaited return for *Sunset* diva Betty Buckley, and an excuse for Susan Egan, the especially belle Belle from *Beauty and the Beast*, to bend gender. The story, adapted from the eighteenth-century romantic comedy by Pierre Marivaux, twists and turns with each costume change. Directed by Michael Mayer, adapted for the stage by James Magruder, music by Jeffrey Stock, and lyrics by Susan Birkenhead. \$45-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 10/23/97. *Royale Theater, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Previews Goring Pols

Today, the comics who peddle incisive political commentary—the sort that transcends observations about Clinton's weakness for fast food and Gore's resemblance to plywood—are rare and grossly undervalued. The public seems to have about as little interest in what the C-SPAN-literate have to say as it does in voting, and comedy clubs are far more likely to hire goons who complain about their girlfriends than gadflies who complain about their government. Electoral indifference, however, has hardly stopped Lewis Black from building a career out of lampooning the politically fatuous—though it has, perhaps, made him a tad nihilistic, not to mention bitter. He is asked whether Jay Leno is too cautious, for instance.

Cautious? The man's a sissy.

And whether there are any politicians he admires. *No. There's nobody.*

And whether he would describe his own style as “bilious.” *Yes.*

One needn't have an over-functioning liver, however, to appreciate Black's humor. He can be a very endearing man, and his philosophy is well-suited to the foggy, post-partisan politics of the nineties. “The Democrats have no ideas,” he explains, “and the Republicans have bad ideas.” In *Black Humor*, which begins previews on New Year's Eve, the engaging crank takes aim at a variety of tempting targets, from the GOP's quest for an independent counsel (“What do the Republicans think they're going to find? That Clinton went to rich people to get him elected? Like that's news?”) to the depletion of the ozone layer. In preparation, Black devours generous daily helpings of print media and several megabytes of CNN. For some of his colleagues—Bill Maher, Dennis Miller—such fluency has paid off in a big way; for Black, who's also a playwright, it's starting to pay off in a small one: He appears all the time on *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* and has a regular gig on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*. “doing,” he says, “whatever John Chancellor did for CBS before he dropped dead.”

JENNIFER SENIOR

A View From the Bridge—Anthony LaPaglia, last seen in *The Rose Tattoo*, stars in Arthur Miller's affecting drama about the passion of betrayal. Directed by Michael Mayer. \$50. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30; Wed., and Sun. at 2:30. Opened 12/14/97. *Roundabout Theatre's Stage Right, 1530*

Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Black Humor—Lewis Black peddles his brand of shrewd, informed political comedy without, amazingly, invoking Bill Clinton's weakness for Big Macs or Al Gore's resemblance to plywood. \$25–\$27.50. Wed. and Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8 and 10:30. Previews begin 12/31 for a 1/10 opening. *Cherry Lane Theatre*, 38 Commerce St. (239-6200).

Century City—A professional baseball player is accused of sexual assault and hires one of L.A.'s most successful female defense attorneys. Intrigue, as well as a tangle of *Oleanna*- and *Disclosure*-type questions, ensue. Written by Mark Lee; directed by Constance Grappo. \$25. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. Previews begin 12/31 for a 1/14 opening. *WPA Theatre*, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).

I Can't Remember Anything/The Last Yankee—The Signature Theatre Company continues its Arthur Miller season with these two relatively recent one-acts, both directed by Joseph Chaiken. \$30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 12/30 for a 1/11 opening. *Signature Theatre*, 555 W. 42nd St. (244-7529).

June Moon—A revival of a revival. Last year, the Drama Dept. brought back this 1929 comedy by Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman to great acclaim; this winter, the story of the Tin Pan Alley songwriter who falls for a big-city sophisticate comes roaring back, after a bit of tweaking in Princeton, New Jersey, at the McCarter Theatre. Directed by Mark Nelson. \$20–\$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 1/15 opening. *Variety Arts Theatre*, 110 Third Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (239-6200).

The School for Scandal—One of the most famous comedies of manners in the English language, and a great deal cattier than most daytime talk shows. \$18–\$30. Tues., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opens 12/29. *Pearl Theatre*, 80 Saint Marks Pl. (598-9802).

Now Playing

As Bees in Honey Drown—Socialite Alexa Vere de Vere—one part Hepburn, two parts eyeliner, three parts luxury addict—enlists a young author to write a screenplay about her life. Written by Douglas Carter Beane; alertly directed by Drama Desk

Award winner Mark Brokaw. Starring Bo Foxworth and J. Smith-Cameron. \$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 7/24/97. *Luaille Lortel Theatre*, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. \$39–\$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre*, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).

The Broadway Kids Sing Broadway—A musical revue of songs made famous by Broadway kids. Expect tunes from *Annie*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Oliver*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*. \$20. Sat. and Sun. at noon. Through 1/12. *John Houseman Theatre*, 450 W. 42nd St. (354-2220).

Christmas at the Ivanovs—A deeply twisted adaptation of Alexander Vvedensky's already-twisted Yuletide tale. The plot includes a decapitation and a suicide; the characters include a singing woodcutter, a killer nanny, and a poetry-quoting dog. Merry Christmas! \$25–\$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/4. *Classic Stage Company*, 136 E. 13th St. (677-4210).

A Christmas Carol—Here, there is spectacle unlimited and good cheer galore as the grouchy old skinflint Scrooge becomes humanized by the triple whammy of the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future. I caught Roddy McDowall, who alternates in the role of Scrooge with Hal Linden. English-born and a former child star, this sterling actor is eminently suited to the part. No mere star turn, this is a performance. A huge supporting cast manages to be not only delightful but also reasonably British. Tony Walton has conjured up a goodly section of Mayhew's London; the costumes of William Ivey Long seamlessly blend high-flying fancy and Savile Row elegance. (Simon: 12/15/97). \$25–\$65. Wed. at 2, Thurs. at 5 and 8, Fri. at 2 and 7:30, Sat. at 11, 2, 5, and 8, Sun. at 11, 2 and 5. Through 1/4. *Theater at Madison Square Garden*, Seventh Ave. and 32nd St. (307-4111).

Clue: The Musical—Improbable, but true. Colonel Mustard, Professor Plum, Miss Scarlet, et al. sing their way through the board-game whodunnit. Book and direction by Peter DePietro; lyrics by Tom Chiodo; music by Galen Blum, Wayne Barker, and Vinnie Martucci. \$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 12/3/97. *Players Theatre*, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).

Cyrano de Bergerac—Frank Langella, who has always had a nose for a star-turning truffle, now gets to show it off in this 100th-anniversary production of Edmond Rostand's classic at the Roundabout. In addition to playing the title character, Langella directs and provides the adaptation. \$50. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Opened 12/9/97. *Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre*, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).

Defying Gravity—Titanic loathers, take heart. Although this is a play about the space-shuttle-Challenger disaster, it comes from the reliably twisted imagination of Jane Anderson, author of *The Positively True Adventures of the*

Alleged Texas Cheerleader Murdering Mom. Starring Lois Smith. \$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *American Place Theatre*, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. \$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse*, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).

Flumena—Maria Tucci, last seen as the wonderful Ruth Steiner in *Collected Stories*, stars in this version of Eduardo DeFilippo's 1946 romantic comedy, which she translated herself. Presented by the Blue Light Theater Company. \$37.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Mon. at 8. Through 1/4. *Theatre Four*, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. \$40–\$45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30; food and drink available/optional. *Starburst Theatre*, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).

Godspell—The first all-black production of Stephen Schwartz's 1971 rock opera. \$25. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 3 and 7:30, Sun. at 3. Opened 2/6. *Victoria Theatre*, 235 W. 125th St. (769-8183).

Goose-Pimples—The New Group inaugurates its fall season with this searing comedy by Mike Leigh, writer and director of the films *Naked*, *Secrets and Lies*, and *Career Girls*. Scott Elliott directs. \$25–\$30. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Judith Anderson Theatre*, 422 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. \$37.50–\$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 2 and 7:30, Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse*, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—From letters, biographies, and court transcripts, writer-director Moisés Kaufman has put together an absorbing show about Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for “gross indecency with male persons.” \$20–\$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 6/5. *Minetta Lane Theatre*, 18 Minetta Lane (307-4100).

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's play benefits from an original slant: child molestation as an act of consenting partners, with the child as a willing participant. Miss Vogel has written a memory play about a pedophile and his big-breasted niece by marriage, Uncle Peck and Li'l Bit, names a trifle too apt to ring true. The driving lessons Uncle Peck gives Li'l Bit over the years are a slow, careful—even caring—seduction. Mark Brokaw has directed inventively. (Simon: 3/31/97). Now starring Molly Ringwald and Bruce Davison. \$25–\$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 3/16/97. *Century Theater*, 111 E. 15 St. (239-6200).

Howard Crabbtree's When Pigs Fly—An irrepressible, technicolor celebration of puns, fabric, and gay life. \$45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater*, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. \$47.50–\$50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2:30 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre*, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard, who, by turns, waxes vulnerable and outrageous in her one-woman shows, returns to Off Broadway for the first time in nearly a decade. \$35–\$40. Tues.–Sat. at 9. Through 12/31. *Westbeth Theatre Center*, 151 Bank St. (307-7171).

The Irish . . . and How They Got That Way—An irreverent, lovingly told Gaelic history by Frank McCourt, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Angela's Ashes*. \$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 1/4. *Chelsea Playhouse*, 125 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).

Joseph Gabriel Magic—Magician Joseph Gabriel mixes sleights of hand with large-scale illusions.

Onstage Phantom Two

P.S. 122 rings in the New Year with two richly spooky productions: a puppet-and-mask adaptation of G. K. Chesterton's 'The Man Who Was Thursday: A Nightmare,' and '70 Hill Lane,' an Off West End import about an exorcism-resistant poltergeist. For tickets and more information, call 477-5288.



\$25-\$45. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Last Session—This is a musical that, strangely, is about AIDS, and, stranger still, is not at all morbid. Music and lyrics by Steve Schallchlin, upon whose life the musical is partially based. Book and direction by his partner, Jim Brochu. \$25-\$30. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8; Wed. at 2:30 and 8; Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/17/97. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. \$35. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

The Lunch Anxieties—Larry Kuno's new dark comedy about four friends who confess their various neuroses and secrets over lunch. Tony-winning actor Michael Rupert directs; Do Gooder Productions, a group that donates its proceeds to community charities, presents. \$30. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Harold Clurman Theatre, 412 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Major Barbara—Perhaps the most electrifying showcase for George Bernard Shaw's considerable debating talents, this play, written in 1905, explores some of the author's favorite themes by pitting the rich against the poor, the idealist against the pragmatist, and the young against the old. \$30. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. and 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Mere Mortals—David Ives presents six one-acts, ranging from Mamet to mini-golf to mayfly mating rituals. \$45. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/29. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Mindgames—Marc Salem, a mentalist and former director of research for *Sesame Street*, does a slew of fancy math tricks, stops his own pulse, and predicts the contents of people's wallets. \$40. Tues. at 8; Wed. at 2:30 and 8; Fri. at 8; Sat. at 2, 6, and 9; Sun. at 3. Opened 11/17/97. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Mojo—Jez Butterworth's Olivier Award-winning comedy, soon to be a film, about five toughs who try to launch their careers in London's fledgling rock-and-roll scene. Watch for shades of Tarantino, not just in the gritty, paranoid dialogue but in the cheerfully violent plot. \$32. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 7. Through 1/17. *Atlantic Theatre Company, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Never the Sinner—American Jewish Theatre presents the sensational story of Leopold and Loeb—two wealthy, well-educated, and queer teenagers who in 1924 murdered a young boy on a whim. Through 1/4. \$32-\$35. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Pearls for Pigs—The latest and perhaps most accessible work to date from the venerable Richard Foreman. This time, the writer and director probes the limitations of his own medium—the theater—through a bunch of amusing thespian archetypes and an actor called The Maestro, who feels his sanity under siege whenever he climbs on stage. \$30. Mon.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8. *Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. (279-4200).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." \$35. Mon. and Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Pride's Crossing—It was a glorious day for women in the arts—and everyone else—when Tina Howe and Cherry Jones joined hands. One of our subtlest playwrights and one of our most incisive performers have combined talents to give us this delicate, minor-key memory play, which, by turns, is wistful, sassy, radiant, and melancholy. It rehearses the life of Mabel Tidings Bigelow from 10 to 90 in seemingly random order, the way reality and remembrance play hopscotch with each other. Mabel is a quirky, headstrong, despotic nonagenarian whose high point was being the first woman to swim the English Channel the harder way, from England to France. Cherry Jones has to

be seen to be believed—if then. Without aid from makeup, she roams fast and free across the decades, embodying all ages and conditions through the sheer power of acting. (Simon: 12/22/97). \$50. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Radio City Christmas Spectacular—Live animals. Rockettes, mistletoe. \$25-\$57. Tues.-Fri. at 2:30 and 7:30, Sat. at 10, 1, 3:30, 6:30, and 9, and Sun. at 10, 1, 4, and 7:30. *Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Sixth Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts. (307-1000).*

Revenge in the Mob—The inevitable offspring of interactive comedies *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral* and *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*. A four-course meal is included, so we'll assume the carnage isn't graphic. \$60. Fri. and Sat. at 8. *Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th St. (1-888-MOB-BOYS).*

The Seagull: The Hamptons: 1990's—The Worth Street Theater presents a contemporary version of Chekhov's classic. \$25-\$35. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (279-4200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan, from lost baggage to lost illusions, from Hertz to other hurts and frustrations. Nothing is overlooked, though some things are a mite undercooked. Even the Cathtilian lithp geth a tuneful thong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97). \$40; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7:30 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (362-2590).*

The Show Goes On—A revue of the songs of Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, the duo responsible for *The Fantasticks*. \$30-\$35. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Opened 12/17/93. *Theatre at Saint Peter's Church, Citicorp Center, 54th St. and Lexington Ave. (935-5820).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. \$24.50-\$47.50. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

10 Naked Men—See title. Written and directed by Ronnie Larsen, the author of *Making Porn*, which just closed after more than 500 performances. \$30-\$35. Tues.-Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Opened 10/16/97. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. (239-6200).*

That's Life!—A musical revue about Jewish family life. \$25. Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-9090).*

Three Days of Rain—Richard Greenberg, who specializes in contemporary drawing-room comedies, paints in a slightly darker hue this time around. There's still humor here, and romance, too, but at the heart of this drama lie two estranged siblings who discover a private journal kept by their father. \$47.50. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. Through 1/11. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage I at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St., then a reception at Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl., with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. \$65-\$75. Tues.-Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. (239-6200).

Two Pianos, Four Hands—Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt, a pair of talented pianists who never made it to the recital halls, wax philosophical about pushy parents and smug concert judges. \$40-\$45. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Opened 10/30/97. *Promenade Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Visiting Mr. Green—Eli Wallach, who made his Broadway debut more than a half-century ago, stars in this new comedy about a relationship between a young man and an older Jewish widower. \$35-\$45. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (505-0700).*



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art

Brancusi Photographs... Adam Drawings

Galleries Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Pierre Bonnard—One painting from 1895 and selected drawings from 1908–1935; through 1/31. CDS, 76 E. 79th St. (772-9555).

Mark Catesby—Watercolors of the flora and fauna seen by the British naturalist-artist on his journeys to Carolina, Florida, and the Bahamas between 1722 and 1726; through 1/23. New York School of Interior Design, 170 E. 70th St. (472-1500), Mon.–Sat. 10–5.

William Gropper—A selection of paintings and drawings by the New York-born Social Realist (1897–1997); through 1/10 (see also Solos, 57th Street Area). Nardin, 605 Madison Ave. (486-1888).

Franz Kline—A survey of the Abstract Expressionist's works, from his earliest sketchbooks to his final painting; through 1/17. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (988-6870).

Markus Lüpertz—Monumental bronze sculptures of mythical figures; through 1/10. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Henri Matisse—A selection of drawings, etchings, lithographs, linocuts, and aquatints; through 1/10. Horan, 35 E. 67th St. (517-9410).

Saul Steinberg—More than 40 drawings by the artist from the estate of Sigrid Spaeth, a graphic artist and designer who had a close relationship with Steinberg for more than 30 years; through 2/7. Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. (861-7338).

57th Street Area

Richard Baker—Recent small-scale paintings that depict tulips and pickled vegetables in glass jars against surreal backgrounds; through 1/17. Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (397-6780).

Burgoyne Diller—Sculptures, wall reliefs, and drawings for three-dimensional works spanning 1930 to 1965; through 1/17. Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (247-0082).

Jean de Brunhoff—Illustrations from the book *Babar and Father Christmas*; through 1/17. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

William Gropper—A centennial celebration of the New York-born Social Realist (1897–1997); through 1/31 (see solo shows, Madison Avenue and Vicinity). ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (644-8300).

Mercedes Lasarte—Recent still-life paintings; through 1/8. Spanierman, 45 E. 58th St. (832-0208).

Joan Nelson/Rodrigo Moynihan—Recent landscape paintings on paper/Late paintings. Through 1/24. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

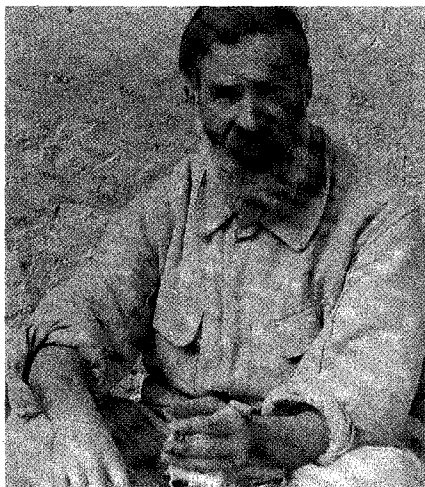
John Newsom—Drawings of animals, women, and commonplace objects in allegorical vignettes; through 1/31. McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

Jonathan Shahn—Sculpted plaster heads, each one contained in an illuminated plaster box; through 1/10. O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. (355-3330).

Trevor Winkfield/Stuart Shills—Recent paintings that depict stylized figures in fantastic interiors/Landscape paintings produced during the Philadelphia artist's annual stay in Ballycastle, Ireland. Through 1/5. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Rachel Berwick/John Divola—An installation featuring an aviary inhabited by two Amazon parrots that have been trained to speak an extinct Carib Indi-



Photography The Other Brancusi

Encouraged by Man Ray, who helped him set up a darkroom and passed on various printing techniques, the sculptor Constantin Brancusi produced a large body of photographs, including the self-portraits and studio views in this collection of prints originally owned by his friends, critics, and lovers. At Jason McCoy Gallery, 41 East 57th Street; through February 7.

an language using documentation of that tribe by the eighteenth-century naturalist-explorer Alexander Von Humboldt/An installation of set stills between 1931 and 1934 that depict motion-picture sets. Through 1/17. Wooster Gardens, 39 Wooster St. (941-6210).

David Bunn—Recent conceptual works by a California-based artist; through 1/24. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (925-4338).

Tomás Clusellas/Kevin Clarke—Paintings of lip marks/"Vernal Passage," a series of photographs taken in and around Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital at the time the artist's wife was dying of breast cancer. Through 1/17. Grand Salon, 83 Grand St. (226-1861).

Daniel Hauben—Paintings of New York City views; through 1/31. Ingbar, 568 Broadway (334-1100).

Paula Hayes—Recent gardening projects; through 1/17. AC Project Room, 15 Renwick St. (219-8275).

Kana & Olympios—A collaborative exhibition of performance, installation work, video projections, and

photography; through 1/17. Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (965-0753).

Sherry Markovitz—Sculptures of animals and dolls embellished with beads, feathers, and jewels; through 1/24. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Melissa Meyer—One-of-a-kind encaustic on paper works produced with the Garner Tullis Workshop; through 1/24. Golden, 16 Mercer St. (334-3124).

Beatriz Milhazes—New paintings that continue the artist's interest in constructing combinations of familiar elements such as medallions, rosettes, lace, flowers, and necklaces; through 1/10. Thorp, 103 Prince St. (431-6880).

Beverly Pepper—Recent paintings that are the artist's response to the surroundings of her studio in Todi, Italy; through 1/17. Cowles, 420 W. Broadway (925-3500).

Christopher Anselmo Priore—Sculpture and works on paper; through 1/10. Donahue/Sosinski, 560 Broadway (226-1111).

Ray Rapp—Video sculpture and installations from the past ten years by this artist who disassembles and reconstructs television sets and video monitors; through 1/8. TZ Art, 28 Wooster St. (966-9059).

Walter Redinger—New biomorphic fiberglass sculptures; through 1/10. Albus, 25 Thompson St. (966-1758).

Julião Sarmiento—A large-scale triptych that was made specifically for Sarmiento's solo exhibition as the official representative of Portugal in the Portuguese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale earlier this year; through 1/24. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405).

Marilee Stiles Stern—Works on paper that depict faces, children, babies, and body parts metamorphosing into increasingly complex images; through 1/24. Kind, 136 Greene St. (925-1200).

Robert Williams—New paintings; through 1/31. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Chelsea

Franz Ackermann—New paintings by a Berlin-based artist; through 1/10. Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. (627-5258).

George Condo and William Burroughs—Collaborative paintings, drawings, and a sculpture that were made at Burroughs's home in Lawrence, Kansas, over an eight-year period; through 1/17. Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. (727-7366).

Graciela Hasper—Paintings by an Argentine artist whose colors and geometric shapes draw on Argentina's Art Deco architecture; through 1/29. Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695).

James Hill—Recent found-object assemblages that are painted with tiny dots the color of precious metals and refer to settlements that were formed in the American West during the gold rush; through 1/28. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Yayoi Kusama/Andy Warhol—The artist's sculpture, *A Snake*, from 1974, which has never been exhibited in New York/A sculpture, *Silver Clouds* (1966), that consists of dozens of inflated Mylar cloud forms. Through 1/31. D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (352-9460).

Judy Ledgerwood—Recent abstract paintings; through 1/24. Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. (929-0500).

Robert Longo—A series of 366 small black-and-white drawings installed salon-style throughout the gallery that create a narrative using images ranging from the dramatic to the serene; through 1/10. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Scott Lyall—A sculpture installation; through 1/31. Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. (463-7770).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Photograph courtesy of Jason McCoy, Inc.

Joan Mitchell and John Chamberlain—An exhibition pairing the works of these two Chicago-born artists, with gestural abstract paintings by the former and sculpture by the latter; through 1/10. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Erin Parish—Meditative abstract paintings that evoke sea and sky; through 1/10. Coploff, 526 W. 26th St. (674-1024).

Ernesto Pujol—Works that combine found and sculpted objects to explore the social and political construction of gender identity; through 1/31. Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. (627-9930).

Oswaldo Romberg—A retrospective of works from the past 30 years, including the artist's analytical color scales—canvases covered with chromatic strokes of color—and his collage paintings that extract color schemes from reproductions of art-historical icons; through 1/10. Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (352-1600).

Hugh Steers—Figurative paintings; through 1/18. Anderson, 453 W. 17th St. (463-0970).

Carrie Yamaoka—Abstract paintings on Mylar mounted to wood panel; through 1/17. Debs, 529 W. 20th St. (647-7080).

Other

François Morellet—A neon installation and three sculptures by the French artist; through 1/31. Davies, 23 Commerce St. (243-6840).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Beacon Hill—980 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (734-3636). Fifty paintings and drawings by Jervis McEntee (1828-1891), and additional seldom-seen works by Casilear, Colman, Gifford, Hart, Kensett, others; through 1/17.

Graham—1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767). Abstract paintings by Barth, Mann, and Martinelli; through 1/17.

Hirsch & Adler Modern—21 E. 70th St. (535-8810). An exhibition entitled "Apprentice, Mentor, Friends" featuring the work of late sculptors Tony Smith and Christopher Wilmarth; through 1/24.

57th Street Area

Goodman—24 W. 57th St. (977-7160). "20/20," with works by Baumgarten, Cragg, Dean, Horn, Richter, others; through 1/10.

Helman—20 W. 57th St. (245-2888). "Notable Notes," a selection of drawings by writers and composers including Laurie Anderson, John Cage, Lewis Carroll, G. K. Chesterton, e. e. cummings, Merce Cunningham, and others; through 1/17.

D C Moore—724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111). American landscapes by Avery, Bluemner, Burchfield, Kuhn, and Marin; through 1/10.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (219-0473). "Suspended Instants," featuring sculpture and site-specific works by emerging artists from Rio de Janeiro and New York City at this gallery and at the Sculpture Center (see Group Shows, Madison Avenue & Vicinity); through 1/10.

Artists Space—38 Greene St. (226-3970). "Lines of Loss," with works by five emerging Mexico City

artists whose site-specific installations are linked not by style or medium, but by their unorthodox action; through 1/10.

Golden—39 Wooster St. (274-0080). "Strange Days," with works by seven artists investigating the odd and fantastic nature of the human form; through 1/10.

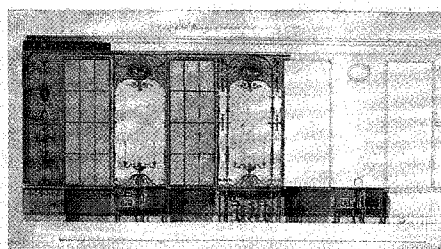
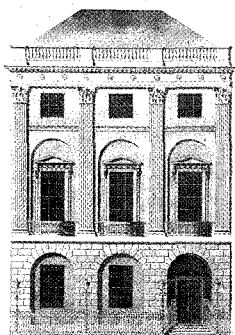
M-13—72 Greene St. (925-3007). Works on paper by Amenoff, Cyphers, Kim, Miller, Moore; through 1/15.

Other

White Columns—154 Christopher St. (924-4212). "Blind Faith," an exhibition of photographs, drawings, sculpture, and other forms of conceptual art that asks one to suspend disbelief, featuring works by Hanson, Jakob, Jennings, Larson, Lundberg, Monick, others; through 1/18.

Retrospective Adam Style

Under ordinary circumstances, one must be in central London to admire the extraordinary artworks and antiquities collected by the innovative English architect Sir John Soane (1753-1837). There, in Sir John Soane's Museum, the ambitiously unconventional mansion he built himself in 1813, are two series of Hogarth paintings (*The Rake's Progress* and *The Election*), paintings by Canaletto and Turner, drawings by Piranesi, and an actual sepulchral chamber housing the sarcophagus of Seti I, king of Egypt circa 1370 B.C. and father of Rameses the Great. For architectural historians and students of interior design, however, the real treasures are the seldom-exhibited drawings and watercolors of the Scottish neoclassical architect Robert Adam (1728-1792); his brother and partner, James (1732-1794); and the artists who worked in their studio. Now



66 of these 30,000 drawings have left the museum—and come to the United

States—for the first time. "Robert Adam—The Creative Mind: From the Sketch to the Finished Drawing," a traveling exhibition currently on view at the Frick Collection (1 East 70th Street; through April 5), emphasizes the breadth of Adam's creative genius through examples of his designs for and drawings of churches, castles, country houses, and cottages; his plans for public architecture; and his lesser-known capriccios of picturesque ruins in gardens and other classical subjects. The development of Adam's "Etruscan style" can be traced to the sketches of his tutors Charles-Louis Clérissseau and Jean-Baptiste Lallemande, with whom he studied in Italy, as well as to the architectural fantasies of Piranesi, who was a friend of Adam's. But the exhibition is also an occasion to reflect on the perspicacity of Soane, who, as a young architect, had met and admired Adam, and purchased the works from Adam's heirs for his museum in 1833 knowing they were out of style (they had already been rejected by the British Museum and failed to sell at auction). Thanks to Soane, a record of dazzling achievement has been permanently preserved.

EDITH NEWHALL

Photography

Harry Benson—A three-decade retrospective of photographs of U.S. presidents and their families, from the Kennedys to the Clintons; through 2/7. Newseum/NY, 580 Madison Ave. (317-6500), Mon.-Sat. 10-5:30.

Zeke Berman—Recent black-and-white photographs and works from the seventies and early eighties, including found-object still lifes, and diptych, triptych, and quadriptych constructions depicting shoes, shirts, pants, and stacks of clothing; through 1/17. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

Constantin Brancusi—A collection of vintage photographs that were acquired from friends, lovers, and collectors of the artist, including self-portraits and views of his sculptures in the studio; through 2/7. McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (319-1996).

Louis Brawley—Pinhole photographs of buildings; through 1/10. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (243-5937).

Caribbean Cultural Center/African Diaspora Institute—408 W. 58th St. (307-7420), Mon.-Fri. 11-6; \$2 suggested admission. "Picturing England: The Photographic Narratives of Vanley Burke." An exhibition of large-scale color photographs of England's Caribbean and Asian communities; through 2/15.

Valdir Cruz—Photographs of indigenous people in the Brazilian rain forest; through 1/10. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (223-1059).

Benedict J. Fernandez—A retrospective of works by this New York-born photographer known for his images of protests; through 1/24. Leica, 670 Broadway (777-3051).

Greenberg—120 Wooster St. (334-0010). Vintage photographs from the thirties by Abbott, Prom, Justo, Kaplan; through 1/17.

ICP—1130 Fifth (860-1777), Wed.-Sun. 11-6; \$4, \$2.50. "Images

From the Machine Age: Selections From the Daniel Collection." Photographs, drawings, and prints spanning the twenties through the fifties; through 2/22. . . . "Nelly, From Athens to New York—The Work of Elli Seraidari"; through 2/22.

ICP Midtown—1133 Avenue of the Americas, at 43rd St. (860-1777), Tues. 11-8 (6-8 admission by voluntary contribution), Wed.-Sun. 11-6;

\$4, \$2 seniors and students. "Weegee's World: Life, Death, and the Human Drama." A retrospective of more than 200 images by the legendary tabloid-news photographer; through 3/8.

Kasher—54 North Moore St. (966-3978). Vintage retouched press prints dating from the twenties through the sixties, by anonymous photographers and by Robert Capa, Joe Rosenthal, Roman Vishniac, others; through 1/10.

Danny Lyon—The first New York exhibition of photographs from Lyon's legendary book, *The Bikeriders* (1969), taken between 1962 and 1966 when he was a member of a midwestern outlaw motorcycle club; through 1/18. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (750-7070).

Diana Michener—Black-and-white self-portraits that depict the artist in a landscape, her nude body painted white; through 1/17. PaceWildensteinMacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Morthland—225 Tenth Ave. (242-7767). "Scene From Behind," with photographs depicting views of scenes

and objects as seen from behind by Alvarez Bravo, Arbus, Callahan, Carter, Friedlander, Gibson, Levitt, Mann, others; through 1/10.

Marvin E. Newman—Early shadow compositions made on the streets of Chicago in the fifties by the Institute of Design photographer; through 1/24. De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. (327-1482).

Parsons School of Design—66 Fifth Ave. (229-8987). "Living for the City: Twenty Years of New York Street Photography," with works by Ackerman, Biddle, Kaplan, Mermelstein, Plachy, Sandler, others; through 1/15.

Adrian Piper—Black-and-white self-portraits taken in conjunction with the artist's study of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*; through 1/31. Erben, 476 Broome St. (966-5283).

Paul Shambroom—Seven photographs from the artist's project on hidden places of power; through 1/17. Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. (925-8035).

Bert Stern—A retrospective of the photographer's advertising and fashion work from the fifties to the present; through 1/10. Staley-Wise, 560

Alexandre Brongniart and the Triumph of Art and Innovation, 1800-1847." A survey of the achievements of the Sèvres porcelain manufactory when it was under the direction of the brilliant Alexandre Brongniart, featuring porcelain blanks and finished pieces and 110 working drawings and watercolors that have not been previously exhibited in the United States; through 2/1. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.-Sun. 11-5 (Thurs. to 8); \$2, \$1 seniors and students.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966-1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Studio Museum in Harlem; through 3/15. . . . "The Picnic: An Installation by Ernesto Pujol"; through 3/15. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3-9, Thurs. and Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 1-6; \$3 suggested donation; \$2 students; \$1 senior citizens, children under 12 free.

7272); Wed.-Sun. 11-5, Thurs. 12-7; \$4, \$2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—"Robert Adam, The Creative Mind: From the Sketch to the Finished Drawing." Sixty-six drawings and watercolors by the renowned eighteenth-century architect Robert Adam, his brother and partner, James, and artists employed in their office that were selected from the 9,000 Adam drawings acquired by Sir John Soane in 1833; through 4/5. . . . "From the Louvre to The Frick Collection: Poussin's *The Arcadian Shepherds*." An exhibition of one of the most celebrated icons of French art, Nicholas Poussin's painting, *The Arcadian Shepherds*, on loan from the Musée du Louvre; through 1/25. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; \$5, \$3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Desert Cliché: Israel Now." Works that deconstruct stereotypes of Israeli culture, by eighteen contemporary Israeli artists; through 2/4. 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Wed.



Happening Museums may not be aware that Title IX (the 1972 civil-rights act prohibiting discrimination based on gender) can be utilized by woman artists who feel they should be included in those institutions' typically male-dominated shows. From January 8 through April 25, Dorfman Projects and Art Resources Transfer, Inc. will draw attention to our museums' unsavory sexism with a three-part exhibition of six decades of works by woman artists (such as Mary Beth Edelson, left, and Merrill Wagner, right) and accompanying events and talks. At Dorfman Projects, 529 West 20th Street; fax 741-1356 for further information.



Broadway (966-6223). **Kunié Sugiura**—Recent photographs of quotidian objects, flowers, crickets, and frogs by this photographer

who is among four artists included in the Museum of Modern Art's current exhibition "New Photography 13"; through 1/10. Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (255-8450).

Tessa Traeger—Photographs of the people living in the mountainous Ardèche region of France; through 1/24. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Museums

Alternative Museum—"Expansion Arts: Artists of Our Time II." Works by seven contemporary artists that incorporate technology; through 1/17 (museum is closed 12/22-1/1). 594 Broadway (966-4444), Wed.-Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

American Craft Museum—"Four Acts in Glass: Installations by Chihuly, Morris, Powers, and Vallien"; through 1/18. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10-6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6-8); \$5, \$2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"The Nature of Diamonds." An exhibition exploring all aspects of the mineral, from its geological origins to its place in history, art, adornment, and literature, featuring significant gems from around the world; through 4/26. . . . "Drawing Shadows to Stone: Photographing North Pacific Peoples, 1897-1902." A commemoration of the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup North Pacific Expedition of 1897-1902, including approximately 100 archival photographs of scenes from daily life; through 5/31. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.-Thurs. 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; \$8 suggested contribution, \$6 students and seniors, \$4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment." Mandalas from Tibet, Nepal, China, Japan, Bhutan, India, and Indonesia, and a Kalachakra sand mandala constructed by monks from the Namgyal monastery, the Dalai Lama's personal monastery; through 1/4. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (288-6400), Tues., Wed., Fri., and Sat. 11-6 (Thurs. to 8), Sun. 12-5; \$3, \$1 students and seniors, free Thurs. 6-8.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory:

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Monet and the Mediterranean: A Centennial Exhibition." Sixty-five paintings executed by the Impressionist during his trips to the Italian Riviera, in 1884, the French Riviera, in 1888, and Venice, in 1908; through 1/4. . . . "The Furniture of George Hunziger: Invention and Innovation in Nineteenth-Century America." Furniture designed by George Hunziger (1835-1898) from the museum's collection; through 2/15. . . . "Graphic Alert: AIDS Posters From the Collection of Dr. Edward C. Atwater"; through 2/8. . . . "Working in Brooklyn: A Centennial Exhibition." Works by emerging artists who show with Brooklyn-based galleries and alternative spaces; through 1/25/98. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-9, Sun. 11-6; \$4, \$2 students, \$1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum—"Design for Life: A Centennial Celebration." An exhibition examining the role of objects in daily life through works from the museum's collection, among them architectural drawings, graphics, textiles, ceramics, glass, jewelry, rare books, and industrial-design products; through 1/4. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8420), Tues. 10-9, Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5; \$3, \$1.50 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"Rosa Bonheur." The first American retrospective devoted to the nineteenth century's acclaimed animal painter; through 2/21. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.-Sat. 11-6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Tracey Moffatt: *Free-falling*." A group of 25 photographs and a video installation by the Australian artist and filmmaker; through 6/14. . . . "Richard Serra: *Torqued Ellipses*." Three monumental sculptures of Cor-Ten steel that explore the shaping of space rather than material as their primary subject; through 6/14. . . . "Fred Sandback: *Sculpture*." Sculptures created from yarn, including new works and earlier works from Dia's collection; through 1/4. . . . "Dan Flavin: 1962/63, 1970, 1996." Three installations using fluorescent light and six separate fluorescent works by the late sculptor; through 6/14. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.-Sun. 12-6; \$4, \$2 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"Taíno: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture From the Caribbean." The first comprehensive survey of the art of the Taíno, the dominant culture in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Bahamas from about 1200 A.D. to the arrival of Columbus in 1492; through 3/29. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-

11-8, Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Sat. 11-5; \$2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective." The first full career retrospective of the artist's work since 1976, including paintings, drawings, sculpture, and prints; through 1/7. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.-Wed. 10-6, Fri. and Sat. 10-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; \$15, \$10 seniors and students (this is a special admission fee for the Rauschenberg exhibits and includes entrance to the Guggenheim Museum SoHo).

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective." The first full career retrospective of the artist's work since 1976, including paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, and performance and technology-based pieces; through 1/4. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500), Sun. and Wed.-Fri. 11-6, Sat. 11-8 (6-8 pay what you wish); \$15, \$10 seniors and students (this is a special admission fee for the Rauschenberg exhibits and includes entrance to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum).

Japan Society—"Japanese Theater in the World." A history of Japanese theater traced through costumes, masks, puppets, musical instruments, posters, and other historic objects and ephemera; through 2/1. 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155), Tues.-Sun. 11-5; \$3 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"ASSIGNMENT: RESCUE, The Story of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee." The story behind the 1940-41 rescue mission undertaken by Varian Fry, a New York-based Frenchman who arranged safe passage out of France for many anti-Nazi artists, writers, scientists, and political refugees; through 3/29. . . . "Facing the New World: Jewish Portraits in Colonial and Federal America." The first comprehensive survey of rare, early American Jewish portraits, by Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Sully, and other artists, dating from 1700 through the 1830s; through 1/11. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45, Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5; free); \$7, \$5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Gianni Versace." A tribute to the late designer that reveals the influence of art on his fashion and theater designs; through 3/22. . . . "Jackson Pollock: Early Sketchbooks and Drawings." Fifty-five rarely or never-exhibited pages from the artist's three earliest extant sketchbooks, and 27 independent drawings, all dating from 1937 to 1941; through 2/8. . . . "Francesco Clemente: Indian Watercolors." Eight-

teen recent watercolors by the Italian artist who spends part of each year in Madras, India; through 2/8. . . "John La Farge." A selection of paintings, drawings, watercolors, and stained-glass windows drawn from the museum's collection of works by the nineteenth-century American artist; through 1/25. . . "The Private Collection of Edgar Degas." More than 250 works drawn from the collection of the nineteenth-century French artist, including paintings, pastels, watercolors, drawings, and prints by such masters as Ingres, Delacroix, Daumier, Manet, Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Degas himself; through 1/11. . . "Richard Pousette-Dart, 1916-1992." A survey of the American Abstract Expressionist's paintings and works on paper; through 2/22. . . "The Drawings of Filippino Lippi and His Circle." Drawings by the fifteenth-century master, and by Fra Filippino Lippi, Raphael, Sandro Botticelli, and other artists in his circle in Florence; through 1/11. . . "Flowers Underfoot: Indian Carpets of the Mughal Era"; through 3/1. . . "King of the World: A Mughal Manuscript From the Royal Library, Windsor Castle"; through 2/8. . . "Klee Landscapes." Works in all media from the Berggruen Klee Collection; through 2/8. . . "Master Hand: Individuality and Creativity Among Yoruba Sculptors." Masks, free-standing figures, containers, and architectural posts by male and female Yoruba masters who were active from the mid-nineteenth through the first half of the twentieth century; through 3/1. . . "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche"; through 1/4. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; \$8 contribution, \$4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); \$8, \$4 seniors and students.

Museum at F.I.T.—"Fifty Years of Fashion: New Look to Now." A selection of historically significant clothing from the museum's own collection, beginning with Christian Dior's controversial "New Look" of 1947 and ending with the contemporary fashion scene; through 1/10. . . "The Saris of Princess Niloufer." Nine saris from a collection of saris previously owned by Princess Niloufer, one of the last of the Imperial Ottoman princesses, and a selection of drawings; through 1/3. . . "Beads and Sequins: Scintillating Fashion." Sequined clothes and accessories from the twenties to the present; through 1/3. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5966); Tues.-Fri. 12-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

Museum for African Art—"African Faces, African Figures: The Arman Collection." African sculptures from the collection of the sculptor Armand P. Arman; through 4/19. 593 Broadway, bet. Houston and Prince Sts. (966-1313); Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12-6; \$5, \$2.50 seniors, students, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"The Image Business: Shop and Cigar Store Figures in America." A selection of life-size, carved-wood shop and cigar store figures that were made by ship-carvers from the 1840s to the 1890s; through 1/11. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533); Tues.-Sun. 11:30-7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage-A Living Memorial to the Holocaust—"Permanent exhibitions of more than 2,000 photographs and 800 historical and cultural artifacts documenting the Jewish experience from the 1880s to the present, and 24 films chronicling the memories of Holocaust survivors. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (968-1800), Sun.-Wed. 9-5, Thurs. 9-8, Fri. and eve of Jewish holidays 9-2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; \$7, \$5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection, Vienna." Paintings and works on paper by the Austrian Expressionist (1890-1918), many of which have not been previously exhibited; through 1/4. . . "On the Edge: Contemporary Art From the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection." Paintings, sculptures, prints, photographs, and video installations given to the museum by Elaine Dannheisser and the Dannheisser Foundation last year; through 1/20. . . "Achille Castiglioni: Design!" A retrospective of works by the Italian architect and industrial designer known for his imaginative designs for such items as ashtrays,

glassware, bathroom fixtures, and vacuum cleaners; through 1/6. . . "New Concepts in Printmaking 1: Peter Halley." Artworks created by Halley as digital files on computer disk, comprising wallpaper and rub-down flowcharts that are fabricated by professional printers whenever a site-specific installation is planned; through 2/8. . . "From Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to Andy Warhol: Exploring Techniques." An exhibition focusing on various printmaking techniques, featuring more than 70 works from the museum's collection; through 2/8. . . "New Photography 13." Recent works by Rineke Dijkstra, An-Mylê, Vik Muniz, and Kunié Sugiura; through 1/13. . . "A Decade of Collecting: Recent Acquisitions in Contemporary Drawing." Installation-scale drawings collected by the museum over the past decade; through 1/13. . . "Projects: Steve McQueen." A new film/video, *Deadpan*, that is a play on the Buster Keaton 1928 silent film *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*; through 2/10. . . "The Hubley Studio: A Home for Animation." Concept art, animation drawings, storyboards, background paintings, and layouts for the films of John and Faith Hubley, who established the Hubley studio in 1955; through 2/1. . . "Ellsworth Kelly: 15 Works on Paper, 1949-1958." Drawings executed when the artist was living in France, from 1948 to 1954, and after he returned to New York in the mid fifties; through 1/13. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.-Tues. 10:30-6, Thurs. 10:30-6, Fri. 10:30-8:30 (4:30-8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; \$9.50, \$6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"New York From Above: An Aerial View." Paintings depicting aerial views of the city by Spelman Evans Downer; through 6/14. . . "Under the Big Top: Circuses in New York." Costumes, models, props, posters, and other circus paraphernalia and ephemera dating from equestrian John Bill Rickett's first circus on Broadway in 1793 to today's Big Apple Circus; through 2/22. . . "Beyond the Grave: Cultures of Queens Cemeteries." Photographs of cemeteries in Queens taken by Dr. Ilana Harlow; through 3/8. . . "A Dream Well Planned: The Empire State Building." Photographs, drawings, models, and memorabilia associated with New York's most famous icon; through 1/11. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; \$5, \$3 students and seniors.

National Academy Museum & School of the Fine Arts—"Fair & Free: Images of Childhood, 1827-1992." Paintings, works on paper, and sculptures depicting children; through 3/8. . . Art at the Edge: Framing Nineteenth-Century America." A selection of nineteenth-century frames from the collection of Eli Willner & Company; through 1/11. . . "The Artist's Eye: Will Barnet Selects From the Permanent Collection." A selection of 40 portraits from the museum's collection, including works by Bellows, Eakins, Grossman, Lawrence, Rauschenberg, Sargent, and others; through 1/4. . . "Barnet by Barnet: An Installation of Portraits." A selection of portraits from the fifties to the present by Will Barnet; through 1/4. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880); Wed.-Sun. 12-5 (Fri. until 8); \$5, \$3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution—"George Gustav Heye Center, 1 Bowling Green (514-3888), 10-5 daily, Thurs. to 8; free.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Mona Hatoum." A survey of sculptures, video, installations, and photographic documentations of performances by the Palestinian London-based artist; through 2/22. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12-6, Thurs., Fri. and Sat. 12-8 (free Thurs. 6-8); \$5, \$3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 years and under.

New York Public Library—"The Romanovs: Their Empire, Their Books." A selection of illustrated books that were originally in the collections of the Romanovs, the dynasty that ruled the Moscow Tsardom and the Russian Empire for 300 years until the Russian Revolution of 1917, and were acquired by the New York Public Library from the Soviet government in the twenties and thirties; through 2/28. . . "A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Basement Publishing in New York City and Elsewhere." An exhibition focusing on the writers, artists, publishers, and communities

who produced publications using the mimeograph machine from the sixties through the early eighties; through 5/30. . . "Dry Drunk: The Culture of Tobacco in 17th- and 18th-Century Europe." An exhibition covering the history of tobacco in Europe through the library's own materials; through 1/3. . . "Tobacco Leaves: Selections From the Collection of George Arents, Jr.," through 1/3. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10-6, Tues.-Wed. 11-6, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society—" 'Twas the Night Before Christmas." An exhibition of the desk on which New Yorker Clement Moore wrote the poem " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas," and a rare copy of the poem handwritten by the poet for the Historical Society Library; through 1/25. . . "Signs and Wonders: The Spectacular Lights of Times Square." A look at the development of technology and imagery in Times Square's advertising signage; through 3/8. . . "On the Nose: Eyeglasses in New York." An exhibition chronicling the history of eyewear in New York, from eighteenth-century spectacles to twentieth-century driving goggles; through 1/11. . . "To Hell With Reform: The Race to Become Mayor of Greater New York." Illustrations and other materials from the 1897 campaign in which New Yorkers elected the first mayor of Greater New York; through 1/4. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.-Sun. noon-5; \$5, \$3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Jack Smith: Flaming Creature"; through 3/1. . . "John Coplans: A Self-Portrait"; through 3/29. . . "Jackie Winsor: Sculpture"; through 3/1. . . "Lynne Yamamoto: Selected Work"; through 3/1. . . "Martin von Haselberg: New Works"; through 2/1. . . "Some Young New Yorkers: Four Artists"; through 3/1. . . "Vertical Painting Show"; through 6/28. . . "Heaven: Public View, Private View"; through 2/1. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; \$4 suggested donation, \$2 students and seniors.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Medieval Bestseller: The Book of Hours." 100 Books of Hours from the library's collection; through 1/4. . . "Romanticism to Realism: Nineteenth-Century German Drawings." A survey of the Library's collection of nineteenth-century German drawings; through 1/4. . . "Cultural Curios: Literary and Historical Witnesses." A selection of objects owned by famous literary figures from the Library's permanent collection; through 1/4. . . "On Wings of Song: A Celebration of Schubert and Brahms"; through 1/4. . . "Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol"; through 1/4. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5, Sat. 10:30-6; Sun. 12-6; \$6; \$4 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966-1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Bronx Museum of the Arts; through 3/15. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 1-6; \$5, \$3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"The Warhol Look/Glamour Style Fashion." An exhibition showing how Warhol merged the worlds of style, fashion, and contemporary art, comprising paintings, clothing, photographs, archival material, and reconstructed period window displays; through 1/18. . . "Richard Diebenkorn." A retrospective of paintings by this California artist (1922-1993), who moved back and forth between abstraction and representation and is best known for his "Ocean Park" cycle of abstracted landscapes; through 1/11. . . "Heart, Body, Mind, Soul." Paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, and photographs from the museum's collection that reflect the key directions in American art at the close of the century; through 1/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Thurs. 1-8; \$8, \$6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6-8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Pictures at an Exhibition: An Installation by Christian Marclay." An installation incorporating works from the Whitney's permanent collection; through 1/25. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.-Sat. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

restaurants

Polistina's... Sushi Express... Truffle Menu

Manhattan

Lower New York

A.J.'s Niota—This casual Indian duplex makes for a nice diversion from SoHo's French-and-Italian-restaurant stranglehold. The downstairs bar and upstairs dining room are ornately decorated with carved wood and silver doors, and the menu features whole tandoori fish, lots of vegetarian options, and weekend brunch. 337 W. Broadway (431-6222). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

Capsouto Frères—Landmark French bistro with talked-about soufflés. Flemish-style building hosts local business folks at lunch. Dinner is a New York mix of neighborhood regulars, tourists, and trekkers from uptown. Dishes to try include the terrine Provençal and the roast duckling with ginger-and-cassis sauce. 451 Washington St. (966-4900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. 2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candleabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. 341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.

Donald Sacks—A corporate dining room for those brave enough to leave the confines of their own glass walls. Straight-up American bistro fare for a strictly business crowd and peckish Century 21 shoppers. 220 Vesey St. (619-4600). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. 124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Il Mattone—In a neighborhood populated by pricey destination restaurants, this affordable Italian place is a great, dependable alternative. Try the brick-oven pizza or house specialties like penne alla vodka, pollo Sorrentino, seafood scampi, and vitello saltimbocca. 413 Greenwich St. (343-0030). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some New York advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, \$35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, \$15-\$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, \$15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: (\$) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. 127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I-M) AE, MC, V.

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special three- and five-course menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. 462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Le Pactole—Contemporary and classical French cuisine in sophisticated surroundings with a breathtaking view of the Hudson River. Host-owner Romeo DeGobbi makes brunch on Sunday a must. 2 World Financial Ctr., on the balcony of the Winter Garden (945-9444). (M-E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zepole at the TriBeCa, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. 239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. 105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.

Noor's—This casual, accommodating downtown restaurant features the cuisines of India and Bangladesh. Share an assorted appetizer plate, and then sample one of the house specialties like matar ponir (homemade cheese with sweet peas) or lobster patia (the tail meat cooked with coconut). 94 Chambers St. (732-5011). (I-M) AE, DC, MC, V.

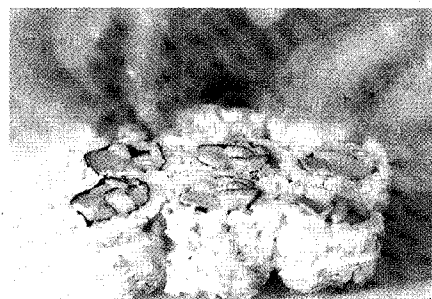
Salaam Bombay—Sophisticated Indian food has made it to the heart of TriBeCa. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. 317 Greenwich St. (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

SoHo Kitchen & Bar—Grape nuts celebrate the 96-spigot Cruvinet, ordering flights of Cabernets or seven Pinot Noirs to taste and compare, but SoHo neighbors love it, too—for all those beers on tap, for the thin-crust pizza, for a glance at the game on the TV overhead. 103 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (925-1866). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a \$17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. 143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.

Wall Street Kitchen & Bar—As downtown grows more and more residential, its halls of finance, like this former bank building, are being converted into service establishments. This sister of SoHo Kitchen & Bar offers a similarly extensive selection of beers and wines by the glass, plus such eclectic American fare as beer-braised short ribs with egg noodles, and pizza topped with shrimp, smoked bacon, and roasted tomatoes. 70 Broad St. (797-7070). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this land-



Takeout Eastern Addition

New amid the general frenzy of the flagship Dean & DeLuca in December is a sushi counter, a hub of exceedingly focused energy where a trio of chefs carves and rolls the usual suspects (uni, salmon, hamachi, tofu) in individual pieces and party platters (\$45.20 for 48 pieces; call ahead). (560 Broadway, at Prince Street; 431-1691.)

mark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted blue-point oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open ravioli of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while

waiters manage to carry a tune and serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. 13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M-E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. 12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. 88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Below 14th Street, West

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. 131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M-E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Boxers—A lively neighborhood American bistro on a heavily trafficked corner of Sheridan Square. The giddy bar scene brings them in, and the high-spirited frenzy and good food keep them coming back. (A newer uptown branch offers a similar menu of American classics like chicken potpie and grilled steaks and burgers, and is decorated with a similar canine motif.) 190 W. 4th St. (633-BARK). Also, 1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

El Charro Español—Heaps of thoughtfully prepared authentic Spanish cooking. Do yourself a favor and sample the hearty paella and the house sangria. A sleeper worth getting in on. 4 Charles St., nr. Seventh Ave. (242-9547). (M) AE, CB, MC, V.

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. 75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I-M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en crouste, and cassoulette. 314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.

Rincón de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. 226 Thompson St. (260-4950). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Salam Cafe and Restaurant—This casual Arabic restaurant ensconced in a Village brownstone offers a broad variety of Middle Eastern food, including kebabs, couscous, and lamb with yogurt-and-sesame sauce, plus lots of vegetarian options. Try the Lebanese wine. 104 W. 13th St. (741-0277). (I-M) AE, MC, TM, V.

Sevilla—Regulars flock to this popular old-world Village spot for its famed paella à la Valenciana and chicken Villary. Be prepared to overdose on garlic. 62 Charles St. (929-3189). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

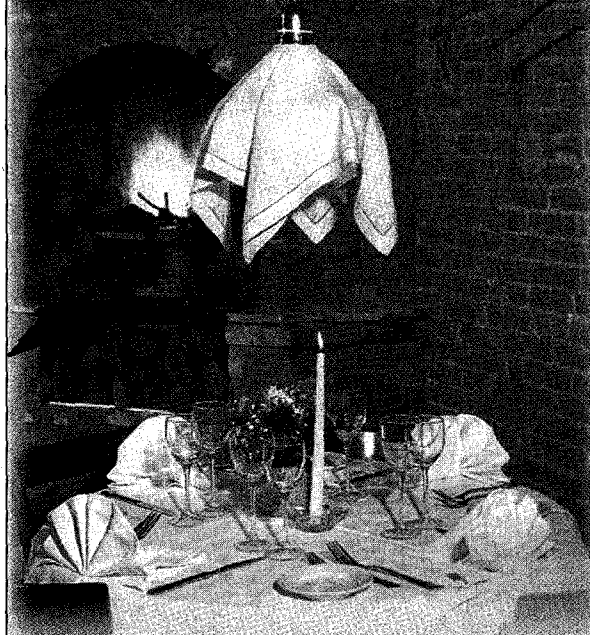
Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. 168 W. 4th St. (242-9338). (I-M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. 69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has three working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. 16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

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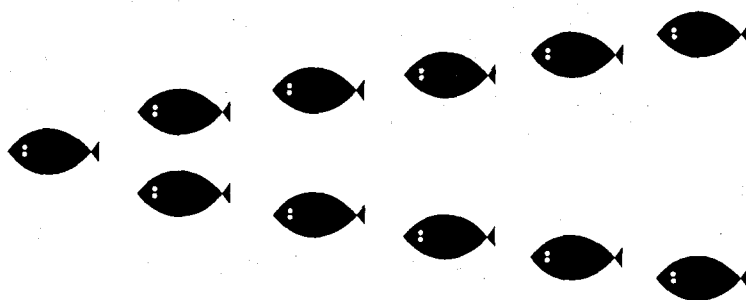
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14th-42nd Streets, East Side

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. 488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudi by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We love the white-peach sangria. 23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Brew's—As casual and comfortable as a burger joint gets. This two-story landmark always pleases. Great beer selection, and the always hospitable longtime owners, the Brew family, make this an oasis in the desert above 14th Street. A new attraction is a weekend brunch accompanied by live Irish music, and fifteen versions of that most archetypical brunch drink, the Bloody Mary. 156 E. 34th St. (889-3369). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.

Campagna—The Letterman crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that...? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. 24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. 325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American newcomer doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. 42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Heartland Brewery—A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café and a menu as American as its Thomas Hart Benton-ish murals. Accompany your choice of microbrew with comfort food like meat loaf with buttermilk smashed potatoes, stout-glazed chicken with apricots and juniper berries, and—for adventurers—buffalo burgers. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. 35 Union Square W. (645-3400). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. 122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. 102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand*

Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore,

shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. 8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. 108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. 21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

14th-42nd Streets, West Side

Preview The Guiding Appetite

Unlike Carmine's, Ollie's, or Virgil's—the super-successful, ultracasual restaurants owned by the Alicart management company—Polistina's (2275

Broadway, near 82nd Street; 579-2828), a pizzeria and wine bar opening next week on the Upper West Side, is named for an actual Alicart partner. But Godfrey Polistina isn't exactly proprietary about his namesake; in fact, he can't wait to share some of his impending limelight.

Polistina's was the unfinished project of Arthur Cutler, Alicart's founder, who died of a heart attack last June at 53.

A Brooklyn-born visionary who built an empire on his own plebeian tastes and uncanny knack for picking locations in burgeoning neighborhoods, Cutler left behind a string of successful businesses and a group of partners intent on completing his projects in the same unconventional spirit. "All of us at one time were employed by Artie," says John De Loach, the onetime Carmine's chef who will run Polistina's. "He treated everyone with respect, whether you were a dishwasher or chairman of the board." Or, as

was the case with Gabriela Hernandez, a housekeeper. Hernandez worked at Cutler's Great Neck home for years

before he helped her launch Gabriela's, her own Upper West Side cantina. "Artie was never big on titles or offices," says Polistina. Instead, he relied on his instincts

and his appetite, which was as far-ranging as the road trips he organized under the guise of research. "Any excuse to combine food and travel," remembers Polistina, who accompanied Cutler on a van tour of southern barbecue joints in preparation for Virgil's. Similar pains were

taken with the new pizzeria, which, besides offering specialty toppings like soy mozzarella and chicken sausage, will have sandwiches, homemade ice cream, and two dozen wines by the glass. Having sampled slices around the country, Polistina rhapsodizes about Bianco's, owned by a guy from the Bronx who made his mark in Phoenix, of all unlikely pizza places. As he enthuses over the flavor of the dough and the light and chewy crust, it's clear that Cutler's spirit lives on, and that, in some sense, Polistina is speaking for them both. Especially when he says, "We are guided by our stomachs."

ROBIN RAISFELD

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. 216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I-M) (\$).

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. 40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M-E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Caffe Bondi Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimpata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. 7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro-New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. 107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. 120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.

Tap Room—New York's very first Austrian brewpub, with fresh lagers and pilsners on tap and a menu that indicates a seriousness about food that's rare in the microbrewery business. Goulash, spaetzle, Wiener schnitzel, and homemade sausages sound like the perfect accompaniments for beer. 3 W. 18th St. (691-7666). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.

43rd-56th Streets, East Side

Ambassador Grill—Contemporary cuisine with global accents befitting the U.N. bigwigs who stop by for lunch. The lobster-and-champagne Sunday brunch is a lavish, all-out production. 44th St. in the Regal U.N. Plaza Hotel (702-5014). (M-E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as



Photographs by Warren Selove

non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. 200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Caviar Russe—The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. 538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (980-5908). (M-E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Cocktail Terrace at the Waldorf-Astoria—A convenient roost for a business breakfast or afternoon tea. At night, to accompany your cocktail, there's live piano music and the occasional fashion show. 301 Park Ave., at 50th St. (872-4818). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Diners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. 200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.

Ristorante De Grezia—As much attention is paid to the comfortable surroundings as to the Italian edibles at this East Side restaurant. The room is done up in golden oak and adorned with brass hurricane lamps, and the pasta, like the black penne with shrimp, broccoli and roasted tomatoes, gets special treatment. 231 E. 50th St. (750-5353). (M-E) AE, MC, V.

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops and fish) on the table. 34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. 46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

La Méditerranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. 947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.

Le Périgord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. 405 E. 52nd St. (755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The \$44 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Mica Bar—This quiet side street in Turtle Bay is slowly becoming a spawning ground for luxe lounges. The most striking element of this new duplex is its enclosed deck bar, with a convertible roof that can open and close depending on the season. A menu of light Asian tapas features baked oysters, a variety of satays, and Hong Kong gravlax; the beverage menu, from sake cocktails to champagnes by the glass, is extensive. 252 E. 51st St. (888-2453). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

Monkey Bar—David Rockwell's glamorous renovation of this landmark bar retains the original murals and sconces, and the menu offers extremely contemporary renditions of American fare, like tuna tartare with mango and avocado, and baked lobster with smoked bacon, corn chowder, and pommes Anna. 60 E. 54th St. (838-2600). (E) AE, MC, V.

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. 551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. 200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I-M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Otobe—Customers are ministered to by their own chefs in the private teppan-grill rooms. The cool, contemporary décor—beige tones and wood paneling—in the main dining room brings serenity to midtown. 68 E. 56th St. (223-7575). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

The Park Restaurant—The plush surroundings in this new hotel-lobby restaurant are much fussier, but no more elegant, than the French-American fare concocted by ex-Lespinasse chef Fabrizio Salerni. Sample dishes include porcini risotto, yellowfin-tuna tartare in wheat crust, steak-frites, and pan-roasted halibut in crispy rice paper. Piano music performed nightly, and cigar smokers have their own private lounge in which to indulge. 109 E. 56th St. (750-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.

San Martin's—Continental cuisine with big, squishy booths. Eurocafé feel bolstered by a selection of foreign dailies on the tables out front. 143 E. 49th St. (832-0888). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. 280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs, jazz onstage, and American-influenced French cuisine. Executive chef Michel Bourdeaux has gussied up the menu with dishes like Caribbean-style grilled swordfish on spinach, and cabbage stuffed with mushroom and roasted squab. During the more sedate lunch hour, dine to the background music of harp or a classical trio. 151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M-E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Torremolinos—This casual midtown restaurant serves a variety of Spanish regional dishes, like paella Valenciana and Castilian-style rack of baby lamb. 230 E. 51st St. (755-1862). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. 200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Turtle Bay Grill & Lounge—The kind of place where you kick back, light a stogie, and watch the game. Should hunger develop, there's sesame-seared tuna, Dijon-grilled salmon, shrimp pizza, and the like. 987 Second Ave., nr. 52nd St. (223-4224). (I-M) AE, MC, V.

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—The Art Nouveau elegance and hush make this a perfect spot for an illicit tryst or a business lunch. A United Nations of flavors, from honey-lacquered foie gras to grilled Angus sirloin. 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula. (247-2200). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.

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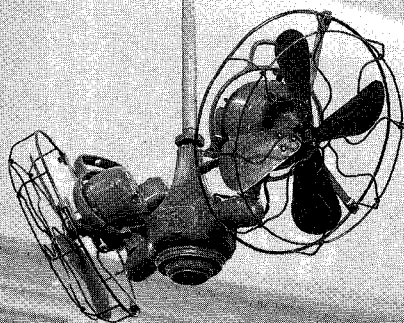
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Restaurants

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620).* (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773).* (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Ben Benson's—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888).* (E) AE, DS, MC, V.

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777).* (M) AE, MC, TM, V.

Broadway Grill—Conveniently located for pretheater, with a good selection of thin-crust pizzas, pastas, and grilled fish and meat. The theatrical element is played up here, both in the décor, with displays of Broadway memorabilia, and in the live nightly performances. *Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel, 49th St. at Broadway (315-6161).* (M) AE, MC, V.

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAs while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513).* (M-E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508).* (M-E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

China Regency—This Chinese-Japanese hybrid is located conveniently in midtown's hotel nexus. Try any of the noodle dishes or a sampling from the sushi bar. Private-party facilities are upstairs. *850 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (247-6440).* (M) AE, MC, V.

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224).* (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200).* (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100).* (M-E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Ed Sullivan's—This restaurant's nostalgic location in the landmarked Ed Sullivan Theater informs its classic style, with "Hollywood" booths, 30-foot ceilings, and mahogany bars. The American menu—well-priced as a \$21.95 pretheater prix fixe—offers such hearty fare as surf-and-turf and pan-seared scallops with truffle mashed potatoes. Live jazz and blues performed nightly. *1697 Broadway, nr. 53rd St. (541-1697).* (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494).* (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Java Shop—A full-service coffee shop, offering take-out and waiter service. The American menu includes Belgian waffles, oven-baked fried chicken, salads, and breakfast served all day long. Charles Morris Mount created a sleek, contemporary design, with a java-influenced color scheme. *1611 Broadway, at 49th St. (246-1960).* (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Judson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. Signature dishes include Vietnamese shrimp rolls and black Angus steak with truffle "smashed" potatoes. The \$32.97 pretheater dinner is a relative bargain. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252).* (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525).* (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482).* (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Lattanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980).* (M) AE only.

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515).* (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Le Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374).* (M) AE, MC, V.

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717).* (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643).* (M) AE, DS, MC, V.

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636).* (E) AE, MC, V.

Patsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491).* (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Pierre au Tunnel—Traditional French cuisine, served in thoroughly charming and comfortable surroundings. *250 W. 47th St. (575-1220).* (M) AE, MC, V.

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112).* (M) AE, MC, V.

Rainbow Room—Still a favorite celebration destination, this deluxe perch 65 floors above sea level offers a variety of entertainment options. Follow a feast—now prepared by acclaimed chef Waldy Malouf—with old-fashioned cocktails in the Promenade Bar or cabaret at Rainbow & Stars. Try the prix fixe and pretheater menus. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000).* (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Redeye Grill—Just what the Carnegie Hall neighborhood needed: a huge room with nudes on the pillars and all manner of smoked fish on the bar. The signature dish, dancing shrimp, is great for sharing. And don't leave without sampling the banana-cream pie. *888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (541-9000).* (M-E) AE, DS, MC, V.

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster,



ASK GAEL

Where can I take my boss the truffle hound?

Just as the white truffles begin to fade, the best black truffles are arriving. What a kick: The chauvinist rivalry between Italy and France means a feast of earthiness for New York. At Le Bernardin, chef Eric Ripert scatters the pebbly black fungus of Périgord throughout a majestic six-course tasting (\$160). Truffle julienne is layered into tuna-carpaccio roll, sliced atop the lobster-and-celeriac "cappuccino," and stuffed into salmon strudel. The same pungent stubble flavors black bass baked en papillote and roasted sea scallops in a creamy lentil-and-foie gras stew. For dessert, dark-chocolate macaroons mimic the theme. (155 West 51st Street; 489-1515.)

mesclun, and julienned vegetables. 321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. 148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, lobster salad with tabbouleh in spicy lobster oil, and swordfish steak at premium prices. Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. 834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.

T.G.I. Friday's—When you crave the familiar, this casual American chain provides predictably decent grub like burgers, steaks, pastas, and potato skins. 761 Seventh Ave., at 50th St. (767-8350). Also, seven other Manhattan locations. (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. 236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.

57th-60th Streets

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. 200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. 57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine

kitchen. Dinner only. 160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. 57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Nirvana—The only Indian restaurant with a superb view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, biryani, kababs, tandooris, and vegetarian dishes. 30 Central Park So. (486-5700). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. 1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. 240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Two Rooms—You'd never expect it, but this landmark townhouse in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge is home to an extremely eclectic establishment, with colonial African décor in the skylit upstairs restaurant and a fireplace in the low-key downstairs lounge. Some of the dishes on chef Thomas Harris's contemporary American menu include seared duck foie gras, risotto of grilled sweet corn and pancetta, and crispy salmon in rice paper. 313 E. 58th St. (223-1886). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Above 60th Street, East Side

Baraonda—When the rest of the neighborhood is dark, this elegant Northern Italian hot spot is just starting to glow. The Rangers celebrated their Stanley Cup victory here, and yes, that was George Michael. 1439 Second Ave., at 75th St. (288-8555). (M) (\$).

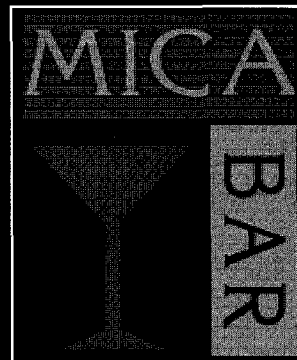
Bella Donna—Creative pastas and thin-crust pizzas at extremely affordable prices keep this cheerful Upper East Side trattoria full of budget diners, first dates, and neighborhood regulars. 307 E. 77th St. (535-2866). (I-M) (\$).

The Boathouse—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an extensive American menu, featuring such enticing dishes as the "lobster Martini," house-smoked, pan-roasted swordfish, and grilled veal chop with truffled mashed potatoes. For postprandial excitement, rent a bicycle, a rowboat, or a gondola. Live jazz Monday through Thursday. Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.

Boxers—This uptown outpost of the Greenwich Village Boxers has a similar menu of American staples like chicken potpie, burgers, and steaks. This spot, in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge, enjoys the distinction of being one of the birthplaces of the Upper East Side swinging singles scene. In fact, the Tom Cruise vehicle *Cocktail* was filmed on the premises. 1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

Cabana—The Pan-Caribbean menu at this East Side restaurant casts wide for its influences, which range from Cuban to Aruban. At \$17.95, a shellfish stew simmered in a tomato-garlic broth is the most expensive entrée. Lunch specials, especially the sandwiches like media noche and jerked chicken, are particularly good bargains. And where else could you find as eclectic an appetizer as the bocadillos, with conch and vegetable fritters, jerked chicken wings, and beef patties sharing the same plate? 1022 Third Ave., nr. 60th St. (980-5678). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years,



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PENANG

thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome. Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut veal chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. 1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. 26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Decade—This place bills itself as the Classic Rock Supper Club, and thus appeals to the sort of over-30 crowd that would know exactly what classic means. Besides dinner—which could be pan-seared wild salmon with a horseradish-potato crust, duck-confit-and-vegetable spring roll, or Arctic char in a fennel consommé—there's a 4,000-bottle wine vault, nearly 200 humidors, and original artwork by Warhol and Rosenquist. And dancing, of course. Jackets required. 1117 First Ave., at 61st St. (835-5979). (M-E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. 1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. 1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.



Opening Young Turk

On the off chance that unadulterated Mediterranean cuisine has maxed out, Karazona Cinar (of Stingy Lulu's fame) has hedged his bets by fusing his own culinary heritage (Kurdish) with that of his Belgian chef at the new Mesopotamia. The Middle Eastern décor—Islamic art, terrazzo floors, and ornate tilework—is a colorful setting for hybrid fare like pan-sautéed lamb fillets with eggplant chutney and lemongrass, served with vegetable couscous, and a dessert pancake with figs, cinnamon ice cream, and rose petals. (98 Avenue B, near 6th Street; 358-1166.)

Hurricane Island—This American restaurant named for an island off the coast of Maine specializes, of course, in fresh lobster and seafood, and offers a better-than-average selection of microbrews with bottles from Belgium and Germany. 1303 Third Ave., at 75th St. (717-6600). (M) AE, MC, V.

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hustle and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Italian spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa alla Calabrese. 1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (223-9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. The food is drawn from all regions; the red snapper with fresh vegetables is a standout, as are the homemade desserts, and the wine list has won awards. Live piano music nightly. 1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Mark's—Decked out like an English library, with plump, tasseled pillows to nest against. Fine East-West cooking and first-rate desserts. 25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (879-1864). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Mesa City—Bobby Flay's casual uptown bastion of innovative southwestern fare offers a unique variety of quesadillas, plus heartier dishes like ribs with molasses-barbecue sauce and sweet-potato tamale with spinach. The bar attracts regulars with the house margarita, spiked with cactus-pear juice, and its selection of twenty brands of tequila. 1059 Third Ave., nr. 62nd St. (207-1919). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. 100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. 28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. 1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

Trattoria Libertà—This Italian trattoria specializes in homemade pasta, and commemorates everybody's favorite outdoor artwork with a Statue of Liberty crown motif. 1574 Second Ave. nr. 81st St. (772-0752). (M) AE, MC, V.

Vermicelli—The décor of this restaurant is meant to evoke a much milder version of the Vietnamese jungle, with birdcage fixtures and a bamboo bar. Try the crispy shrimp rolls, cracked lobster with a ginger-scallop-and-honey sauce, or the grilled pork chop. 1492 Second Ave., nr. 77th St. (288-8868). (I) AE, MC, V.

Above 60th Street, West Side

Bella Luna—Consistently good neighborhood Northern Italian, with rotating art exhibits and a seasonal antipasto table. 584 Columbus Ave., nr. 88th St. (877-2267). (M) AE, MC, V.

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. 1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M-E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.

Delphini—The happy hordes huddled over their plates in this candlelit restaurant love the romantic atmosphere and the wide-ranging Mediterranean menu. Try the paella, the lobster-tail-and-calamari risotto, and the sangria. The sidewalk café and cigar bar make smokers feel welcome. 519 Columbus Ave., at 85th St. (579-1145). (M) AE.

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. 685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I-M) AE, MC, V.

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—and a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sun-dae. After dinner every weekend, a DJ. tilts the place toward a party. 477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.

Iridium Jazz Club—The American food in this subterranean jazz club will satisfy high and low cravings for everything from lobster to fried chicken. 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.

Merlot Bar and Grill—The overwrought, fantastic architecture of what was formerly Iridium restaurant has been converted into this toned-down homage to the grape Merlot, of which there are 50 varieties. Representative French-American menu items include Brie en croûte and salmon with lobster potatoes. 48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Pasha—The Turkish food served here—octopus salad, grilled quail, lamb chops, artichokes in olive oil—suits quite well the current craze for all things Mediterranean. Both the stucco-walled dining room and a separate room for smokers are casually intimate. 70 W. 71st St. (579-8751). (M) AE only.

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. 44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Brooklyn

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. 1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.

Queens

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. 5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) (\$).

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. 1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.

Westchester

La Cremaillere—Make sure to try this charming French restaurant even if you're not lucky enough to inhabit this posh suburb. The Widow Brush House, built in 1750, has been transformed into a modern-day source of such French country fare as roasted rack and leg of lamb with Provençal herbs, and warm brandied banana-and-raspberry tart. 46 Bedford-Banksville Rd., Bedford (914-234-9647). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.

nightlife

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Concerts

George Clinton & the P-Funk All Stars—See box, this page. Hot Heads and DJ Mike Rizzo. 12/31 at 10 P.M. Hammerstein Ballroom at the Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (396-9229). \$85-\$125.

Dream Theater—Who said prog rock is a thing of the past? For massive spectacle, endless soloing, rock songs structured by "movements," and many other Keith Emersonisms, this goofy New Jersey quintet can't be beat. With Big Wreck 1/4 at 7:30 P.M. The Vanderbilt, Plainville, Long Island (307-7171); \$23.50-\$27.

First Night—If your idea of a great New Year's Eve doesn't include drunken louts barfing (or worse) on your trousers, then this citywide something-for-everyone festival is for you. There's no complimentary midnight champagne toast, but when the entertainment is this classy and plentiful, who cares? From 7 P.M. to midnight, Saint Peter's Church (619 Lexington Ave., at 54th St.) hosts

Lionel Hampton's appearance, the night is one of the most exciting and novel takes around on holiday music. 12/28-12/30 at 8 P.M. (additional 5 P.M. shows Sundays). Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (997-1780). \$30-\$35.

"Times Square Ball"—SheMoves, a trio of former Knicks dancers who happily bill themselves as "New York's Spice Girls" (whatever that's supposed to mean), headline this bump-and-groove-a-thon, right off the Great White Way. Rob Base and Allure fill out the bill. 12/31 at 8 P.M. Club Expo, 124 W. 43rd St. (819-0377). \$50.

Clubland

Acme Underground—The club formerly known as Under Acme, renovated and reborn as New York City's classiest small rock venue. 12/31: Swingin' Neckbreakers; Fleshtones; Shake Appeal. 9 Great Jones St., downstairs (420-1934). \$.

The Baggot Inn—A cozy West Village gathering spot



Talent Mothership on 34th Street

The next millennium may still be a few years off, but one futurist of decades past is fairly certain his vision of things to come is already taking shape. "When they cloned that sheep," says George Clinton, "that's as normal to me as any other shit." As Parliament-Funkadelic's guiding light, Clinton was responsible for such funk-in-outer-space conceits as the Mothership, the Bop Gun, and the nefarious Sir Nose D'Voidoffunk. Nonetheless, he maintains, "when *Independence Day* came out, it scared the shit out of me. I knew about Roswell, but I didn't know it happened on July 4!" As they have for several years running, Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars (a band, unfortunately, that doesn't usually feature seventies stalwarts Bootsy Collins and Bernie Worrell) will celebrate the New Year in New York City, this time at the Hammerstein Ballroom.

But Gothamites shouldn't get too used to having the funk crew around: In a couple of years, the psychedelic elder statesman will be off on different shores. "1999," he says.

"We're doing that one with Prince in Hawaii—that's the last time zone to go." Until then, Clinton will continue his busy schedule of touring, recording (he's just released *Live... and Kickin'*), answering dumb questions about his twenty-year-old iconography, and indulging his penchant for scatological diction. "I don't know *shit* about UFOs or any of that stuff," he says, only a little defensively. "Although *Star Trek* used to be my favorite show."

ETHAN SMITH

two sets apiece by violinist Regina Carter, trombonist Steve Turre, and singer Andy Bey. Concurrently, the 26th St. Armory (68 Lexington Ave.) is home to alternative-country stalwarts 5 Chinese Brothers and Western Swing two-steppers Eagle Creek Band. There's salsa and bossa nova in Grand Central, and stand-up comedy at Ethical Culture (2 W. 64th St.). For a complete schedule, shuttle-bus info, and instructions on ordering an admission button, call 922-9393, or go online to www.FirstNightNYC.com.

"Jazz Nativity"—Jackie and Roy host this amazing big-band revue, whose rotating guest-star roster includes Lionel Hampton, Al Grey, Jon Faddis, Tito Puente, Steve Turre, and Jimmy Slyde. There are a few jaw-droppingly Vegas-worthy elements—such as the singing, overacting shepherds, who never, ever break character, Roy Kral's white-bucked vocalese routine, and the drummer boy's nail-biting soprano (made all the more authentically Christmas-pageantlike by a few flubbed notes). But from the New Orleans-garish kings' robes (for "We Three Kings," natch) to the generally excellent musicianship to the "Deck the Halls"—into—"Flying Home" segue that precedes

for NYU students and other sweater-wearing folk enthusiasts. 12/31: Carol Thomas; Matt Turk; Folkstone; the Subway Darwins. 82 W. 3rd St. (477-0622). \$.

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 12/31: There probably isn't a figure in the city better qualified to host a New Year's show than the effervescent Buster Poindexter. With his new Spanish Rocketship Band, the former David Johansen does just that, in tuxedoed fabulosity. 1/3: Dangerous living, bad-ass beats, and that ultra-cool rectangular guitar all add up to one conclusion: Bo Diddley is back in town. 15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile.

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. \$ = cash only.

Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. 12/31: Epic, challenging, and thoroughly unapologetic, Chavez disprove the tired notion that "indie-rockers" don't know anything about proper rock-and-roll spectacle. Their buzzing, dual-guitar assault, spare bass lines, and thundering, Bonhamesque drums are as big and bad as anything arena-rockers of yore could muster. With Thee Pristsreens. 1/4: Nothingface; the Step Kings; Superthrive. 169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). \$.

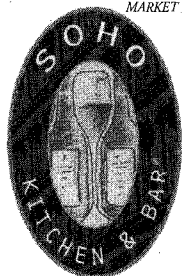
CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's Stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flyer-strewn pit—in a good way. 12/31: Psycho-on-a-stick David Yow continues his experiment in audience irritation (of the best kind) with the improbably long-lived Jesus Lizard. With New York's finest Nirvana-meets-Tom Waits quartet, Skeleton Key. 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). \$.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 12/31: Punishingly funky trapsman Buddy Miles

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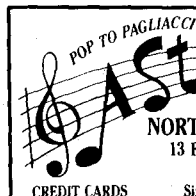
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has dished out beats behind Hendrix, Santana, and Bill Laswell. But it's as his own bandleader that he truly shines. 1/2-1/3: Popa Chubby. 73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). \$.

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 12/30: Burn; Kill Your Idols. 12/31: Pill-popping neo-acid-rockers Monster Magnet. 15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).

Continental—A dark, grimy shotgun shack of a rock club, hosting some of New York's hardest-working rock bands and attended by scroungy hipsters and willful lowlifes—basically St. Marks under a roof. Look for cameos by D Generation and Joey Ramone, who lives in the nabe. 1/3: Lynnfield Pioneers. 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924).

The Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridor home to alternative-rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 12/31: For a sonically diverse New Year's, the Cooler hosts some of the world's most inventive aural alchemists. Forgoing his noise-punk collective Atari Teenage Riot for the night, Berlin anarchist Alec Empire spins jungle, dub, and drum-and-bass sides. Electro-dub impresario Mad Professor leads the Ariwa Sound System through spooky, head-spinning reggae experimentation. Fellow headliners the Silver Apples, who pioneered electronic pop during the sixties, resurfaced about eighteen months ago, sounding as relevant and timely as ever. With D.J.'s Toshio, Wally, Swingsett, Firehorse, and Razmesinai. Sick of hipster sound-sculpting? Head to the new Bactune lounge and check out the twenty-foot HO-scale slot-car track. (\$30 at the door). 1/2: The "Blue Room" party, at which a bunch of psychedelic-trance D.J.'s get down. 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Hidden beneath the Time Cafe, Fez takes some ambition and assertiveness to access on a crowded night. Every Wednesday, Fez presents "Stella: An Evening of Big Room Comedy," featuring veterans of MTV's *The State* and other cutups. Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 12/31: Veteran of Parliament, the JBs, and other soul ventures too numerous to

mention, saxman Maceo Parker long ago transcended the sideman's traditional role, proving himself a damn funky presence in his own right. 17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. 12/29: Jazz Passengers. 12/30: Lee Konitz Trio. 12/31: The Lounge Lizards. 1/2: Mac's Smokin' Section with Lester Bowie; Re-birth Brass Band. 1/3: Zorn, Medeski, and Ribot. 1/5: Oliver Lake Big Band. 74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).

Life—Okay, we give. It is the only hip place on Bleecker Street, even if the doormen can get a little tough on those they deem unworthy. What bouncers don't? 12/31: What do you really need to say about Isaac Hayes? For raw soul power, his is probably the finest show in the city on New Year's. 158 Bleecker St. (420-1999).

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for ladies' night. Every Sunday, it's Manny's World Famous Blues. 12/30: Duke Robillard. 12/31: Little Mike & the Tornados. 1/2: The Black Widow Band. 1/3: Shemekia Copeland. 1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 12/29: Melissa Huffsmith. 12/31: Combustible Edison; Congo Norvell. 1/1: Ritalin Boy. 1/3: Saturnine; Essex Green; the Seems. 1/6: Julien Richards. 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).

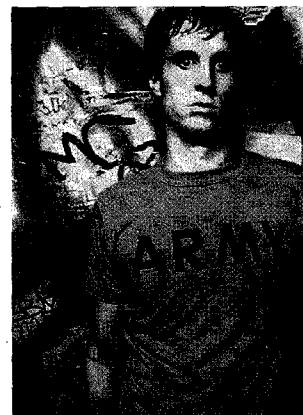
S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 12/29: La India. 12/31: Timbale champ Tito Puente. 204 Varick St. (243-4940).

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Every Friday and Saturday, the Tony Corbisello Big Band pays tribute to various big-band heroes of yesteryear, after which the next generation of swingers takes over, from midnight till 4 A.M. 12/31: Tony Corbisello's eighteen-piece big band. 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presenta-

Performance Tomorrow People

Latter-day dub impresario Mad Professor (left) and Teutonic noise terrorist Alec Empire head up the Cooler's New Year's Eve show in appropriately futurist style. Also on the bill: New York electro-hippies the Silver Apples, drum-and-bass duo We—and, for the Toys 'R' Us club kid in you, slot-car racing. (See Clubland listings.)



Photographs: left: Jane Hirshman/Corbis; right: Phillip Vitis

tion. Avoid the neck-craneing mid-stage column by arriving early. 12/29: Tower of Power. 12/30: Rakim. 12/31: George Porter Jr.; Milo Z. 1/2: New York's favorite hip-hop political philosopher, KRS-One. 1/3-1/4: Rick "Superfreak" James is guilty, all right—of committing some seriously baaad jams. Back with all the innuendo-spouting, fly-fashion-sporting grooviness we've come to expect from him, James is everything R. Kelly wishes he could be. 51 W 21st St. (727-7788).

Tunnel—Cavernous, raucous, and occasionally filled with patrons who live up to its name, the Chelsea institution nonetheless hosts some of the city's most glamorously eighties entertainment. Every Friday, the Blue Angel "exotic cabaret"—relocated from its subterranean TriBeCa digs—mingles strippers, sword swallowers, and fire breathers. 12/31: Grace Jones gives it up in appropriately high style, while D.J. Danny Tenaglia spins his trademark trance beats. 220 Twelfth Ave., at 27th St. (695-4682).

Westbeth Theatre—The West Side's midsize, mid-priced rock venue, which makes up for some unfortunately placed columns with the pleasant addition of a sultry bar and lounge. 12/31: The kids just can't get enough of Sandra Bernhard, so on her show—originally scheduled to close in November—charges, right into the New Year. You go, girl. 151 Bank St. (691-2272).

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Sunday is "Fastbreak," a jungle-techno-hip-hop—"Kung-fu breakfast" extravaganza. 12/29: Michael Ray & the Cosmic Krewe. 12/30: Illuminati. 12/31: Strangefolk. 161 Hudson St. (966-5244).

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 12/31: Kevin Mahogany Allstars. 1/1: Lenny Popkin-Connie Crothers quartet. 1/2-1/3: Lee Konitz's Brazilian Quartet. 1/4: George Roberts's Swiss Jazz Orchestra, with guest star Clark Terry. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M. 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a fine view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 12/30-1/4: Chick Corea and Origin. 131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).

Ed Sullivan's—Tucked practically inside the Ed Sullivan Theater, the old-man bar turned chichi dining spot offers swing jazz nightly and a waiter who looks just like the place's namesake. Every Friday, Sullivan's is home to the Harlem Jazz Legends, fronted by the incomparable singer Laurel Watson. Wednesday, hard-swinging New Orleans clarinetist Rick Hardeman leads his quartet. Saturday, the Joe Traina Quintet, featuring Natalie English. No cover; two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat. 1697 Broadway, bet. 53rd and 54th Sts. (541-1697).

Iridium—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 12/30-1/4: Joe Henderson's recent *Porgy and Bess* imbued the Gershwin opera with the tenorman's trademark warmth, sensitivity, and quick wits. Leading a band that (mercifully) lacks guests like Sting, Henderson mixes material from that set with standards and his own compositions. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30 Sun.-Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).

The Jazz Standard—Midtown south's newest, biggest, and happeningest hangout for hard-boppers and the men and women who love them. You can't hear the bands from the swanky first-floor restaurant, but the basement club's modified menu should more than suffice. 12/30-1/4: Vanessa Rubin and her trio. Special New Year's Eve performance: The Vanessa Rubin sixteen-piece big band,

conducted by Cecil Bridgewater. Sets Sun. and Tues.-Thurs. at 8 and 10 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and midnight; \$10-\$15 cover weekdays, \$15-\$20 cover Fri. and Sat. 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. While no amount of imagination can render the institutional, linoleum-tile décor any more inviting than your average mass feed trough, the concept is fairly hip. 1/2: The Time Horner Group. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post-Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, Jason Lindner's youthful, Ellington-meets-Mingus big band. Wednesdays, it's the Sam Yahel Organ Quartet. Shows start at 10 P.M. 12/31: Across Seventh Street Septet. 1/1: Myron Walden Trio. 1/2-1/3: Richie Vitale Quintet. 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565).

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 12/30-1/4: Kenny Garrett Quartet. 88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleeker St. (242-1785).

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern's Chestnut Room is still a top-flight jazz club—with excellent sound and a full roster of stars. 12/31: "Flying Home" composer and swing-era titan Illinois Jacquet leads his big band. Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 12/30-1/4: Dr. Michael White's Original Liberty Jazz Band of New Orleans. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. 178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037).

Zinno—A pretty Italian restaurant with a tiny piano on its awning, Zinno is more dining spot than jazz club, though its musical guests are often pleasant surprises. Shows Mon.-Sat. at 8 P.M. Every Sunday at 7 P.M.: Larry Rivers Quartet. 12/29-12/31: Junior Mance, Joe Temperley, and Earl May. 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).

Comedy

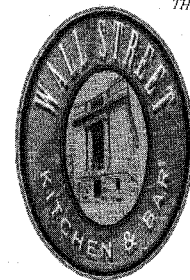
Boston Comedy Club—Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Sundays: "All Star Comedy." Mondays: Open-mike night hosted by David J. Tuesday-Thursday, shows at 9:30 P.M. Fridays and Saturdays, the club promises "the country's top comedians," with shows at 8, 10, and midnight. 82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).

Caroline's Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Caroline's hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays and Tuesdays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 12/31: Jay Mohr headlines and New Year's festivities abound. For \$75, you get the 8 P.M. show, dinner, and a drink; \$125 finds you at the 10:30 show with appetizers, dancing, an open bar until 2 A.M., and a view of the ball dropping on a large-screen TV (the ball is just outside the door, rendering this enticement a little less alluring than the others); but for just \$195, you get it all, baby. 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). \$12.50-\$18.50, two-drink minimum.

Catch a Rising Star—The high-class variety showplace is in the process of broadening its focus from straight stand-up to a mix of sketch and alternative comedy, theater, and musical performances.

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Performance Still Smoking

Ex-con—and soulman extraordinaire—Rick James celebrates his return to the free world with a two-night stand at Tramps, January 3 and 4.

Susie Essman, 1/2-1/3: Mark Estime; Cory Kahane; Lewis Black; Kevin Brennan. 236 W. 78th St. (595-0850). \$7-\$12.

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—For her tenth straight season in the Oak Room, the utterly charming Andrea Marcovicci has put together "All in Fun: The Songs of Mabel Mercer," in which she fêtes a cabaret star of more than one bygone era. Marcovicci's delightful program draws on the vast repertoire Mercer developed during her five-decade career—many of the songs "orphans" (numbers dropped from Broadway shows) and tunes written specifically for Mercer. The theme gives coherence to a set that would otherwise be all over the map. Through 1/3. Tues.-Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.-Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). \$35; \$15 minimum. 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800, ext. 154).

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. 13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).

Bemelmans Bar—The indomitable Barbara Carroll sings through 1/3. \$10 music charge; no minimum. Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).

Cafe Carlyle—Through New Year's Eve, Tues.-Sat., Bobby Short and his eight-piece orchestra carry on their traditional annual engagement. Eartha Kitt returns 1/2. Call for reservations. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. \$50 (\$25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).

Cafe Pierre—Singer-pianist Kathleen Landis's "Warm Songs and Muddled Wine" program is, as its title implies, an opportunity to listen to standards and drink spiced vino. \$12 minimum; jacket and tie required. Tues.-Sat., 8:30 P.M.-12:30 A.M. Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (940-8195).

Don't Tell Mama—Phillip Officer moonlights on Monday nights to give "Greetings of the Season" with special guests. \$10-\$15 cover; two-drink minimum. 343 W. 46th St. (757-0788). \$.

Maxim's—Midtown's monument to hefty art nouveau interior design and heffy French-bistro fare. \$20-\$30 cover. 12/31: Ann Hampton Callaway. 680 Madison Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (751-5111).

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown. Through 1/2: Darlene Love, with Dennis Ray, "Love for the Holidays." \$40 cover. Tues.-Sat. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 11 P.M.; seating for dinner is at 6:30 P.M. 30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).

Sardi's—Every Friday night, John Malino and the Swing Society revive that old Times Square vibe. No cover; \$12 minimum. 234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).

Bars

Teddy's Bar & Grill—The century-old neighborhood standby gets up to speed for the New Year with the retro-groovy lounge sounds of D.J. Tom. 96 Berry St., at N. 8th St., Williamsburg (718-384-9787).

The Room—This candlelit SoHo joint suffers from a perpetual, if mild, identity crisis—it can't decide whether it's a lounge, an indie-rock hang, a reclaimed industrial space, or just a regular neighborhood bar. But the unimposing crowd, generally good music, and truly eclectic beer selection make the Room an oasis of normalcy. 144 Sullivan St., bet. Prince and Houston Sts. (477-2102).

Wednesday night's "This Is Not a Test" broadcasts live on the Web. Ill-advised as it sounds, this marriage of high tech and high jinks is novel, fresh, and entertaining—thanks in large degree to its ratio of cost (free) to talent (Janeane Garofalo, Conan O'Brien, Jon Stewart). Thursday's "The Loft" features a rotating cast of fresh-faced young comics, while Friday's "The Big Bad Music Show" explores that riskiest of all entertainment territory, humor rock. Shows Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. 253 W. 28th St., (244-3005).

Chicago City Limits—The longest-running, hardest-working troupe of finely tuned improvisational-sketch comedians this city ever saw. For their annual New Year's Eve Extravaganza, the gifted Andrew Daly, Carl Kessin, Denny Siegel, John Cameron "Tarrytown" Telfer, and musical director Frank Spitznagel take on the past year's not-so-quotidian headlines in 1997, Year in Review. Hilarity is sure to ensue. Sets at 8 and 11 P.M. Call for reservations. 1105 First Avenue, at 61st St. \$45-\$50.

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 12/31-1/4: Larry Amoroso; Dave Attell; Greer Barnes; Jim David; Greg Giraldo; Rick Crom; William Stephenson. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 8:30 P.M., 10:15 P.M., and midnight; and Sun.-Thurs. at 9 P.M. 117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. 1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.-Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is \$15 Fri. and Sat.; \$12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. 12/29-1/4: Quentin Heggs; Jerry Diner; Nancy Redman; Lenny Varndoe; Richie Byrne; Joe Mulligan; Jim Norton; Rich Ramirez. 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. 1/2-1/3: Susie Essman; Jef Ross; J.R. Havlin; Jim Florentine. Sun.-Thurs. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. Cover is \$12 Fri. and Sat., \$8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. 34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his Letterman appearances. Sun.-Thurs. at 7 P.M.; Fri.-Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. 12/31: Tom Cotter; Greg Carey; Gregg Fitzsimmons; Jim David;

in concert

The Nutcracker's Last Week

Classical Music

Wednesday, December 31

New York Philharmonic—Performs selections from Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty*, Mussorgsky's prelude to *Khovanshchina*, and works by Ravel, Berlioz, and Bizet. With Olga Borodina, mezzo-soprano, and Samuel Ramey, bass; Valery Gergiev, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000)*, at 8; \$30-\$125.

Long Island Philharmonic—Performs music from the forties with the vocal quintet *Five By Design*; David Lockington, conductor. *Tilles Center, C. W. Post Campus of Long Island University, Greenvale (516-293-2222)*, at 8; \$37-\$79, with complimentary champagne.

Thursday, January 1

Bargemusic—Quartet performances of Brahms and Beethoven. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061)*, at 7:30; \$23.

Friday, January 2

New York Philharmonic—Performs Mahler's *Symphony No. 6*; Valery Gergiev, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000)*, at 8; \$20-\$75.

Saturday, January 3

New York Philharmonic—See 1/2.

Sunday, January 4

Music Before 1800—Performs Renaissance music to accompany readings from the Old Testament, and baroque music to follow readings from the New Testament. *Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. (666-9266)*, at 4; \$18.

Bargemusic—See 1/1, at 4:30.

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, 1/1 at 7:30 and 1/3 at 8; Verdi's *Don Carlo*, 1/1 at 7; Peter Grimes, 1/2 at 8; and Boris Godunov, 1/3 at 1. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000)*; \$24-\$200.

Amato Opera—The world's smallest opera house performs Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*.

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the pre-meditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

maus; Anthony Amato, conductor, 1/3 at 7:30 and 1/4 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200)*; \$20.

New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players—Perform *The Yeoman of the Guard*, and an *Auld Lang Syne* sing-along with the orchestra, 12/31 at 8, 1/2 and 1/3 at 8, and 1/3 and 1/4 at 3. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)*; \$25-\$55.

Dance

New York City Ballet—Performs Balanchine's *Nutcracker*, 12/30-1/4 evenings and matinees. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570)*; \$20-\$74.

Forever Tango—The Argentine form interpreted by Luis Bravo. *Walter Kerr Theater, 218 W. 48th St. (239-6200)*; \$30-\$65.

Elizabeth Streb—Performs three new works: *Fly, Across*, and *Hang*, 12/30-1/3 at 8. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800)*; \$35.

Tribute to Jeff Duncan—An afternoon of dances honoring the founder of the Dance Theater Workshop, with performances by Kathy Wildberger, Deborah Jowitt, and Sean Curran. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100)*, at 3; \$7.

Previews Disorder in the Court

Set at the Tower of London in the sixteenth century, Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta 'The Yeoman of the Guard' has the only bittersweet ending the two ever wrote—all the characters couple satisfactorily except the one we really care about. Performed by the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players, Symphony Space.



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The Other Marathon... First Night '98

John Leonard's TV Notes

The College of Comedy With Alan King (12/31; 8:30 to 9:30 P.M.; Channel 13) sits down comics King, Tim Conway, Judy Gold, Buddy Hackett, and Paul Rodriguez on a stage in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before an audience of Harvard students, to talk about what they do ("the radical element") while also doing it (did you hear the one about Lorena Bobbitt, Tonya Harding, and Hilary Clinton?) for *Great Performances*. Funniest of the five is Conway, who doesn't seem to get out much since Carol Burnett went off the air but who tells a wonderful doorbell joke anyway.

Coltrane in a Cadillac (1/3; 10:30 P.M. to midnight; WLIW/21) sends the Scottish actor-comedian "Cracker" Robbie Coltrane on the not-so-lonesome road in a '51 Cadillac convertible from Los Angeles to New York, with opinionated stops in Las Vegas ("drinking is compulsory"), Salt Lake City (after which you want to go to "someplace really smelly"), Dodge City (beef and guns), an Amish time-war, an all-woman ranch, East St. Louis, Mark Twain's Hannibal, high-school football in Ohio, Detroit for Diego Rivera's murals, the Catskills, and the Letterman show. While he scores some easy points, he is never condescending and usually idiosyncratic, and the mix of music that speeds him on his way is wickedly witty.

Principal Takes a Holiday (1/4; 7 to 9 P.M.; ABC) requires blond, skateboarding high-school senior Zachery Ty Bryan to get into the computer files and expunge a demerit from his record so he can collect a \$10,000 check from his grandmother, which will have to be accomplished while the principal, Kurt Fuller, is in the hospital, and a hippie drifter with a sixties agenda, Kevin Nealon, is temporarily in charge of the school, and the gorgeous teacher of history, Jessica Steen, has her cute suspicions, and all of this is tedious bow-wow Disney.

Scattering Dad (1/4; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) requires widowed but agoraphobic Olympia Dukakis to scatter the ashes of her dead husband, Andy Griffith, at Cathedral Rock in the Mexico desert, over the multiple objections of her sibling-rival daughters, Lucinda Jenney and Michelle Rene Thomas, and with the constant kibbitzing of not only Andy's ghost but also a triad of Indian angels only Olympia can see. August Schellenberg also stars as the all-wise Fierce Crow, in a TV movie from a script by Barbara Bosson that's so full of family values, you long for *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Blackout Effect (1/4; 9 to 11 P.M.; NBC), postponed from last November's sweeps, probably because there were two other airplane movies on the other networks, stars Eric Stoltz as an investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board who isn't satisfied with blaming a mid-air collision in which his own pregnant girlfriend perished on the human error of eccentric air-traffic controller Charles Martin Smith. While Stoltz is busy discovering overworked and overstressed controllers, antiquated equipment from the

fifties, a pattern of computer glitches, and a cover-up and tampering with the evidence by both Federal Aviation Agency personnel and their suppliers, a fugitive Smith is plotting to bring all air traffic to a halt on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Actually quite interesting, although—for shame!—not a single mention is made of the Reagan administration's busting of the PATCO union back in 1981.

Radio Highlights

New York & Company—Weekdays at noon. 12/29: Patrick T. Murphy discusses the plight of America's unwanted children in *Wasted*; James H. Jones on *Alfred C. Kinsey*; *Sensible Justice* author David Anderson talks about alternatives to prison. 12/30: Norman Barzman on the Hollywood blacklist and his book *Tender Comrades*; Alain De Botton explains *How Proust Can Change Your Life*; Anne Fadiman on *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. 12/31: Francis Ford Coppola talks about the making of John Grisham's *The Rainmaker*; Gillian Armstrong discusses her version of Peter Carey's *Oscar & Lucinda*; horse-whisperer Monty Roberts talks about *The Man Who Listens to Horses*; curator Elisabeth Easton elaborates on her exhibit "Monet and the Mediterranean," at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. 1/1: Paul Levinson on the information revolution and *The Soft Edge*; Scott Eyman expands on "talkie" pictures and *The*

Speed of Sound; Eric Hobsbawm on his collection of essays *On History*; Robert T. Augustyn and Paul E. Cohen share *Manhattan in Maps*. 1/2: National Labor Committee president Charles Kernaghan on sweatshop violations; John Pezzenti Jr. and his photographic portrait of *Alaska*; Blake Morrison on his new book *As If*. Leonard Lopate hosts. WNYC, 820 AM.

The Written Word

24th Annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading—1/1 at 2 P.M.: The Poetry Project ushers in the New Year with 120 poets, musicians, dancers, and artists performing and reading new works into the night. This year's roster includes Penny Arcade, Jim Carroll, Arto Lindsay, Richard Hell, Maggie Estep, Dana Bryant, Dael Orlandersmith, Taylor Mead, Larry Rivers, John Giorno, Yoshika Chuma, Reno, Tracie Morris, Gordon Gano, Foamola, David Henderson, Pedro Pietri, Victor Bockris, Jackson Mac Low, Edwin Torres, Lynne Tillman, Emily XYZ, John Yau, Rebecca Moore, Eileen Miles, Reg E. Gaines, Homer Erotic, Tuli Kupferberg, Nick Zedd, Bob Holman, Lee Ranaldo, Hal Sirowitz, and a healthy many more. To benefit the Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (674-0910); \$15.

John Corvino, Edward Stein, William Byne, and Mitchell Lasco—1/6 at 7 P.M.: The editor of *Same Sex: Debating the Ethics, Science, and Culture of Homosexuality* is joined by contributing writers for a reading from the comprehensive volume that examines the ethical, religious, and scientific perspectives of gay life. A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Institution The Manhattan Project

The Poetry Project's New Year's Day marathon, now in its twenty-fourth year, is further proof that everything changes but the avant-garde. From 2 p.m. until "past midnight," more than 120 downtown reliables—Jim Carroll, Maggie Estep, and Dael Orlandersmith (below) among them—will read from their favorite works. See listings.



Lectures and Panels

Deconsecration of Kalachakra Sand Mandala—1/4 at 2 P.M.: Tibetan monks from the Namgyal monastery return to deconsecrate the Kalachakra sand mandala, which was constructed in October in honor of the exhibition "Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment." The mandala is swept up during a *puja*, or short service, and then is taken to a location where the sand is ceremonially cast into a body of moving water. Space is limited. Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA); free with gallery admission (\$4).

Tours

New Year's Eve Jaunt—12/31 at 4, 6, and 8 P.M.: Adventure on a Shoestring founder Howard Goldberg leads three walking tours through Chinatown, narrating its colorful history and explaining Chinese food customs and traditions. Stops include a Chinese bakery and herbal shop, a local Buddhist temple, and many more charming little enclaves. The tour ends with dinner at an excellent Chinese restaurant (optional, \$8 with tax and tip). Call for meeting place and reservations (265-2663); \$5.

Photograph by Melissa Zexter.

Swingin' At the Cotton Club—1/4 at 10:30 A.M.: Enjoy brunch while listening to gospel at the legendary Cotton Club. Architectural preservationist John Riddick next presents the club's unique history and an overview of the club's famed performers and patrons alike. Then it's a jaunt through Harlem's elegant Hamilton Terrace and Striver's Row. Call the 92nd St.Y for reservations (996-1100); \$65 (includes brunch).

A Village Christmas—12/21 at 2 P.M.: This tour focuses on the Village's unique history and architecture (from the eighteenth century to the present), with special emphasis on Christmas lore and Yuletide customs. Meet at the Washington Square Arch at the southern end of Fifth Ave. (969-8262); \$10.

New Year's New World—12/31 at noon: Spend New Year's Eve Day on Ellis Island, on an indoor tour of the museum and grounds, celebrating new beginnings in a new land. Meet at the flagpole at the center of Clinton National Monument in Battery Park (439-1090); \$15 (includes boat ticket, movie, and tour).

New York in a New Year—1/1 at 1 P.M.: Explore the history, architecture, and people of New York Island's first place of settlement (and now-thriving financial center), lower Manhattan. Stops include the Woolworth Building, Bowling Green, and sites associated with Alexander Hamilton and J. P. Morgan. Meet on the front steps of the U.S. Customs House, at Bowling Green (439-1090); \$9.

Before Stonewall: A Gay & Lesbian History Tour—1/3 at 1 P.M.: Discover the many facets of lesbian and gay history as you trace the evolution of Greenwich Village as a community mecca. Stops include sites associated with Bayard Rustin, Willa Cather, and two of New York's most endearing cross-dressing politicians. Meet at the Washington Square Arch (439-1090); \$9.

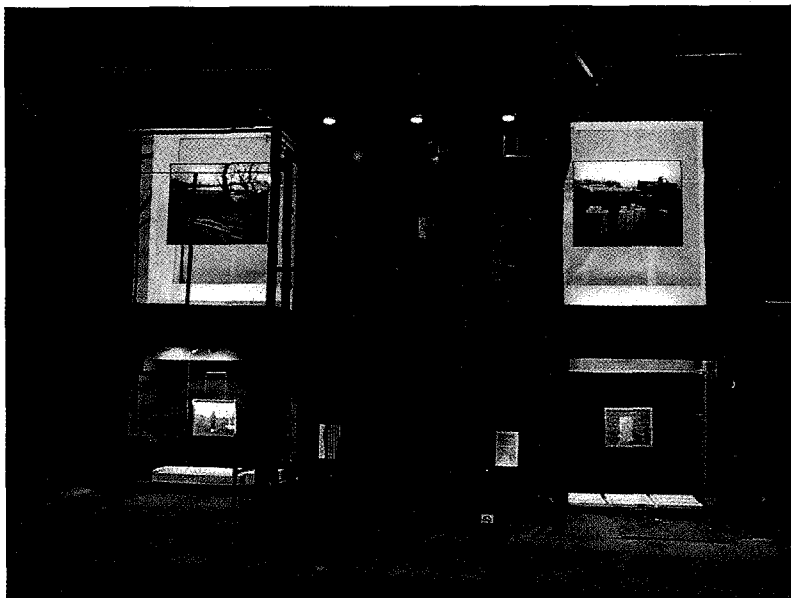
Immigrant New York—1/4 at 1 P.M.: A multi-ethnic walk through Chinatown, Little Italy, the Jewish East Side, and what was formerly Little Africa, Little Germany, and Little Ireland. Meet on the front steps of City Hall (439-1090); \$9.

Rauschenberg: Materials & Mediums—Daily through 1/7 at 2 P.M.: A tour of "Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective," focusing on his innovative use of materials, exploring the social and political issues that motivated his art-making, and uncovering the relationship between pictures and words in contemporary culture. Closed Thursdays. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (423-3500); free with museum admission.

Metropolitan Opera Backstage—Weekdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.: A unique, behind-the-scenes view of the creation of the opera. Includes costume and set design, the performers' rehearsal facilities and dressing rooms, and the opulent auditorium. At Lincoln Center; call for reservations and times (769-7020); \$8.

Exhibitions

Traveling Through China—Through 1/24: More than twenty still lifes, portraits, and landscapes by contemporary Chinese painters depicting images of Chinese life in the aftermath of 1989's Tiananmen uprising. The exhibit was guest-curated by artist and scholar Jian-Jun Zhang of the Shanghai Art Museum. The Forbes Magazine Picture Gallery, 62 Fifth



Installation Hart Beat

It is a lonely island, although a populous one, and a grim place, although naturally pretty. Hart Island (not too far from the Bronx's Orchard Beach) serves as potter's field, resting place for the city's indigent. A single slab of pale concrete marks the grave of 175 adults or of 1,000 children; three quarters of a million people have been buried here since 1869. There is much that is conventionally "interesting" about Hart Island—a "Negro Coney Island" was built on it but never opened, for example, and bleachers from Ebbets Field are stashed here. But Melinda Hunt, for her installation "The Hart Island Project" (on view through February 28 at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum), largely ignores twice-told tales and concentrates instead on the Riker's Island inmates who bury the indigent here, and who regard their task as a great privilege—"The best rehabilitation I've had," says one. Hunt asked the men to jot down their thoughts about the work, and the results are a mute reproach to society. It is not so much that the men seem likable, redeemable, although they do. (Their handwriting is purposeful, almost schoolgirlish; their thoughts run to the astonishing number of infant burials.) It is that they are plainly, desperately unequipped for a life outside prison. Crime is easy to blame on the criminal, but only the most punitive minds could hold him solely responsible for his subliteracy. The inmates may or may not be aware, as they struggle for expression, of how much they have not been taught, but they fully recognize their own potential for burial at Hart Island. "I don't want to die nobody, with nothing or no one to care about me," writes one who declined to give his name. Although Hunt includes the sad statistics about indigent deaths from "gastroenteritis" or "bronchitis," it is the prisoners' letters that illustrate, sometimes obliquely, how neglected deaths are preceded by neglected lives. **LINDA HALL**

Avenue, at 12th St. (206-5549); free.

Glowing Topiary Garden—Through 1/31: An environmental art installation of light, form, and sound by landscape artist Ken Smith brightens up downtown during the holiday season. Sponsored by the Alliance for Downtown New York, the *Glowing Topiary Garden* is a hybridization of a French topiary garden and a Japanese Zen garden. So 250 wind chimes and seventeen large, beautifully lit cones find themselves most intriguingly and strategically placed in Liberty Square Park (next to the World Trade Center).

TOYS!—Through 12/31: A retrospective of more than 200 of the best-loved and most fondly remembered toys from the 1840s through the 1990s. The exhibit explores the part toys play in children's development, as well as their role as highly reflective indicators of our society's changing values and popular beliefs. Highlights of the exhibit include a Ouija Board, circa 1891, The Shakespeare Game, circa 1903, Swingin' Sam the Saxophone Man, circa 1920, Staten Island Fairies, circa 1940, and The Barbie Game: Queen of the Prom, circa 1961. Historic Richmond Town, Staten Island Historical Society, 441 Clarke Ave. (718-351-1611); \$4.

New York From Above: An Aerial View—Through 6/14: An exhibit of 26 paintings by contemporary painter and geographer Spelman Evans Downer that chart the evolution of Greater Gotham over the past 100 years. His work depicts historical landscapes before extensive urbanization as well as space-age satellite views of Manhattan. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); \$5 suggested contribution.

Assignment: Rescue—Through 3/29: "The Story of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee" commemorates Varian Fry, an American relief worker responsible for rescuing nearly 2,000 Jews and opponents of the Nazis, including Marc Chagall, André Breton, and Hannah Arendt, from Vichy France during World War II. Though Fry's efforts are not as well known as those of Raoul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler, his accomplishments constitute one of the most riveting chapters of the Holocaust period. The exhibit is composed largely of historic photographs, artifacts, and related works of art. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); \$7.

Holiday Garden Railways Exhibition—Through 1/4 from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.: Enjoy large-scale model-railway trains as they wind through tunnels, over bridges, and right by reproductions of N.Y.C. landmarks. The New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff (Southern) Blvd. (718-817-8616); \$3.50.

Mechanical Marvels: Invention in the Age of Leonardo—Through 3/1: This exhibit brings the "Renaissance of the Machine" that swept Europe in the fifteenth century back to life, with large-scale silk-screen reproductions of original drawings, 50 remarkable working models, and a number of multimedia and virtual-reality stations. The show concentrates on the inventions of Filippo Brunelleschi, Taccola, Francesco di Giorgio, and Leonardo da Vinci. On view at the Liberty Street gallery at the World Financial Center. Tues.-Fri. 11 A.M.-6 P.M., Sat. and Sun. noon-5 P.M. (945-0505); \$6.

Events

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

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R E E S H E R R
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S N U A N M
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U U O I
D I A G N O S I S A C C R A
A R N T H M
M E T R E R E P R O B A T E
P I R E O B B N
I N S P I R E N E E D L E D
S A E D E S I E
H O N E S T Y D R E S S E R

P L A I N S E V I L A T A A C E
L I S T I N G A P A C E L O B S T E R
A N T O N I A R I S E N E R E C T O R
I D O N O T W R I T E T O M R C L A U S
T A R K U S H E T H E R
A H S S T E E L E R E L I A
I K N O W W H A T H E W I L L B R I N G
O V E N W A R E S O O T I E R Z O E
M A A T I A R A S K I N T E A N D
A N T H O N Y P I S A N E S T S
N A S A N O T H I N G K A T E
L E T G O S A D A C A B I N E T
B O Y G A R B O A N G O R A T R A
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N A R E S P E U R T I A
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A C R E A G E H O O E Y M A R I N E R
D O O R M A N O N I N E P R E P A R E
A N T E L S S E N T A D E S T E



Happening Among the many virtues of First Night New York is its instigation of merriment beginning long before sunset. (Another is how well it has demonstrated the possibilities of alcohol-free hoopla—so well, in fact, that we may soon forget to make the point.) Dancing, skating, exhibitions, TheatreSports, music: It's all available for a flat \$25, which covers thirteen hours of participatory entertainment. (See listings in "The Mix" and "Nightlife.")

thanks to this seventh annual alcohol-free celebration (for which you may need sunglasses, given that it begins at 10 A.M. on New Year's Eve day). Purchase a \$25 First Night button—it's \$5 for children under 12—and you're guaranteed access to a staggeringly long list of events and activities. Dance to Latin music in Grand Central Terminal, take in the view from the Empire State Building's observatory, ride a pony in Bryant Park, watch the Double Dutch Divas do unprecedented things with jump-rope, acquaint yourself with the Freestyle Repertory Theatre's TheatreSports, skate on the Wollman Rink (which is off limits from 8 to midnight to all except First Night patrons). Call 922-9393 for places, times, and locations where First Night buttons are sold. A bonus to button holders is a series of discounts at dozens of restaurants, hotels, museums, etc.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo: The Inaugural New Year's Eve Gala—12/31, 10 P.M. to 3 A.M.: A benefit party featuring dance music and making continuous use of the museum's newly installed "Video Wall." Door prizes, including dinner for two at a number of popular SoHo restaurants, will be awarded throughout the evening. There will be an open bar and access between 10 P.M. and 12:30 A.M. to the current exhibition, "Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective." \$125 (\$100 for members) in advance; \$150 at the door. Call Shaunta Spalten at 423-3581 for tickets.

New Year's Eve Concert For Peace—12/31 at 7:30 P.M.: In celebration of the New Year, the Cathedral of

St. John the Divine will host its fifteenth annual *Concert for Peace*, featuring soprano Sylvia McNair, jazz trumpeter Jimmy Owens, gospel singer Theresa Thomason, tenor Jon Frederic West, the Manhattan School of Music Chamber Symphony, the New York Festival Singers, and others. Amsterdam Avenue at 112th St. (316-7540). Call for reserved seats (662-2133); \$50. General admission is free.

Victorian Holidays at the Botanical Garden—Through 1/4 from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.: Enjoy music, ribbons, lights, and colorful model trains at the New York Botanical Garden's "Victorian Holidays" festivities in the Bronx. Of particular note are "A World of Plants," housed within the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory's crystal palace, and the annual "Holiday Garden Railways Exhibition" (see above). The New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff (Southern) Blvd. (718-817-8616); \$3.50.

Benefits

Coats Needed—New York cares presents its ninth annual Coat Drive, which collects "gently used" coats of all sizes to warm adults and children in need. The Coat Drive distributes the used, but still wearable, coats to homeless shelters, centers for battered women, people with HIV/AIDS, and people living on the street. This year, more than 600 drop-off sites are in operation and include any NYPD facility at any time; Penn and Grand Central Stations weekdays 7:30-9:30 A.M.; and any Blockbuster Video or Home Depot store in N.Y.C., Long Island, or Westchester. Call for more information regarding drop-off sites or to volunteer (223-CARE).

Online

New York Magazine on the Web—"Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com) serves up a new, entertaining—and sometimes even useful—Website every day. In this week's picks: See a site for expecting parents that has birthed a vibrant online community, then congratulate the new mothers with a virtual bouquet. Plus, feel free to shove back a few doughnuts (even if you aren't eating for two) to help you solve a virtual murder at NBC's Internet series, "Homicide: Second Shift." And while you're visiting us at www.nymag.com, sit back and enjoy all our Web exclusives—like daily event picks in "Vanessa Takes Manhattan" or answers to New York's strangest questions in "Ask Sam"—not to mention selected articles from the current issue and archives from your favorite New York columnists.

GAME WEEK

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
RANGERS			TAM MSG 7:30PM			WASH MSG 2 7PM	
ISLANDERS	PIT SC 7PM		COL SC 9PM		DAL SC 2 8:30PM	PHO SC 3 9PM	
DEVILS	BUF SC 7PM	CHI SC 7:30PM		FLA SC 12PM		TOR SC 7:30PM	
KNICKS		ORL MSG/TNT 8PM			NJ MSG 7:30PM	ORL MSG 7:30PM	
NETS	WASH SC 7:30PM	IND SC 7PM			NY SC 7:30PM	CLE SC 7:30PM	
	12/29	12/30	12/31	1/1	1/2	1/3	1/4

● As of press time, the Jets' and Giants' playoff future had not been determined.

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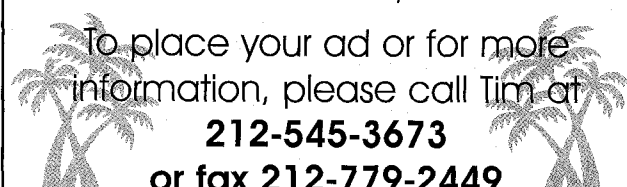
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Single White Male—42, seeks kind, fun, romantic, full-figured single female who enjoys movies, restaurants and New York. 1038 ☐

Warm, Very Pretty—Professional book editor, nonprofessional visual artist, Jewish, 42, widowed, love to cook for friends. Seeking established professional, simpatico man with an avid relationship to people, books, art and politics. Funny is good too. Note/phone, please. 1034 ☐

Beautiful LI Lady—Smart, fit, energetic seeks adventurous man, 35-40, to share love, life, togetherness. 1058 ☐

It Takes Two To Tango—Tall, handsome Jewish (47) male searching for female counterpart. Note/photo. 1023 ☐

'Tis The Season To Be Jolly—But how can I be without you? Recently divorced, white business executive, 50 years young, 5'10", 195 lbs, NJ resident but loves the Big Apple. Desires to meet educated, fit and sensitive woman who is fun-loving and ready for romance. 1006 ☐

Somebody To Love—Pretty, witty teacher, 25, seeks kind man, 25-32. Note/photo. 1011 ☐

Tall, Slender, Sexy—Vital, verbal, active and attractive female seeks white male, 60-65. 1040 ☐

Pretty, Petite Blond—Divorced Jewish professional, NYC/LI, 48, slender, sweet, youthful, sensual - wants to share music, movies, travel, opera, museums...with nonsmoking, spirited, affectionate man, 48-65. Note/photo please. 1029 ☐

Stop, Think—Would you like to meet a terrific, attractive older woman (young 50s) with love of travel and the outdoors; theater, music and books; fine food and wine; thoughtful talks and ready laughter; her 11-year-old son; warm friendships; and all things sensual? Are you intelligent, educated, adventurous, warm and tender? If so, let's talk. 1005 ☐

Tall, Warm, Funny—Good-looking 60-year-old widower seeks slim, attractive woman with same virtues, who feels the best is yet to come. Photo/note. 1007 ☐

Attractive, Well-Educated—36-year-old female looking to meet a well-educated and thoughtful single male. Note/photo. 1008 ☐

Warm, Elegant—(Slim, 5'6") Attorney, great sense of humor seeks fun-loving, unattached counterpart, in mid 40s plus, for fun, adventure and romance. 1069 ☐

Skis The Blacks Out West—6'1", 180, blue-eyed, Nordic-looking Jewish male, all-Ivy education, 34. Extremely athletic. I survived Jewish schools... I don't kill whales or start forest fires. Seek a pretty, down-to-earth Jewish girl who meets this description, and must be willing to lie about how we met. Photo, please. 1016 ☐

I'm Charming, Smart, Good-Lookin'—(At least that's what my mom keeps telling me), 34, entrepreneur (wait 'til you hear what I do for a living). Seeking savvy, adorable Jewish gal, 28-35, who can cut a rug, hike mountains and likes (at least sort of) her job (good jumpshot a plus). Photo/note. 1047 ☐

Looking For An Unselfish Woman—Who is warm, affectionate, good-natured, attractive, single/divorced white female, 25-34, who is fit mentally and physically. I'm a single Jewish male, 37, professional and entrepreneur, dark hair and green eyes, with a good sense of humor - who enjoys working out, travel, movies and quiet evenings at home. Interested in a relationship leading to marriage and children. Note and photo. 1039 ☐

As featured in **Forbes**,
Harvard Law Bulletin
and **People**.

From the Desk of
Daniel G. Campbell, Esquire

New Year's Resolutions: 1997

- ✓ 1. Make partner.
- ✓ 2. Buy weekend home.
- ✓ 3. Lower handicap.
- 4. Go out on better dates.

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Andrea McGinty



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Classy, Quality, Character—Upscale Jewish Wall Streeter, 39, 6'2", GQ looks, Einstein's mind and Cary Grant's charm, seeks smart, sexy woman to 45, who believes in magic. Note/photo. 1057 ☐

Good Guy Hunting—Really attractive blond; 5'7", Masters Degree, late 30s, world traveler, interested in politics and good causes, seeks worldly, intelligent man of integrity and humor for serious relationship. Note/photo/phone. 1061 ☐

Curiously Creative—Funny, very handsome writer/designer seeks female, 30s-40s - loves NYC, tall, passionate about the arts... Many levels to explore. 1042 ☐

Professional, Generous Brooklyn Boy—39, 5'9", Bruce Willis looks, into jogging, fitness...enjoys life, adventurous, energetic, down-to-earth, with a good heart and sense of humor. Seeking a serious relationship with an attractive woman, 27-38. Let's start with dinner. Please include note and photo. 1054 ☐

Beautiful, Real Redhead—Funny and athletic, shy and outspoken. Loves to talk, play and provoke. 38 years, 5'7". Seeks same...but male, 35-45. Accomplishment, wit and devilish good looks needed. 1045 ☐

Fun Lady MD—37, 5'5", 122 lbs, seeks slim, tall, Ivy League gent. 1017 ☐

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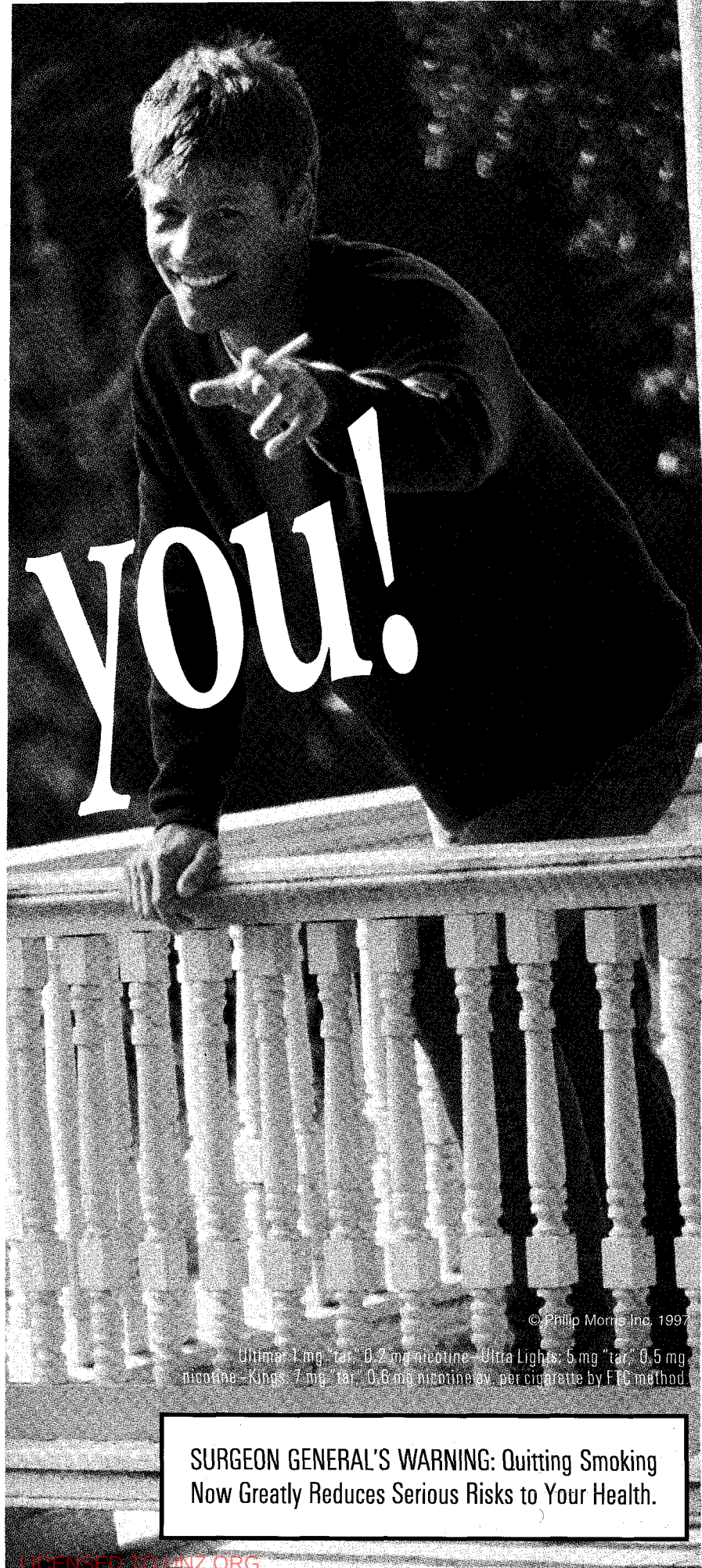
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to lower tar
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NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

Chinese Dog + Tibetan Dog = PEKEAPSO, cubist pet.

Big Grad + Small Parts = SUMMABITS, disagreeable Yale Drama School alumnus.

Coughy Break + Hamburger = TARMAC, smoked fast food.

Above, hybrids. Competitors are invited to devise and define a composite noun, proper or otherwise.

Results of Competition 896, in which you were asked to invent items for a Catalogue for Men.

Report: You guys. Honestly. When you're not munching machos, you're making Jacques jokes. Or studying briefs. Or watching sports. Or not asking for help. Or baffled by womenfolk. Many of these items were devised by womenfolk. Can you tell? See that you do.

First prizes of two-year subscriptions to New York to:

DITKA—the New Orleans Scent.
Linda Giordano, Florence, Ala.
THE HEISMAN COMETH—authentic copy of the MVP statuette.
Albert Komishane, Elizabeth, N.J.
DEFENDS—for the mature athlete.
Kate Coe, South Pasadena, Calif.

Runner-up prizes of one-year subscriptions to New York to:

AGING BULL—the handbook of virility maintenance.
A. Shulman, Sarasota, Fla.
THE RIGHT STUFFING—favorite side dish of the astronauts.
Jeff Brawer, Brookline, Mass.
MARS—cologne from his home world.
Patsy V. Felmet, Wintersville, Ohio

And Honorable Mention to:

WIGWARM—heated toupees.
Jessica Allen, Gaithersburg, Md.
OVERKNIGHT MAIL—armor for those unexpected jousting duels. Guaranteed next-day delivery.
Elicia Falciglia, Reston, Va.
MEN ARE FROM MARSEILLES, WOMEN ARE FROM VENICE—the European guide to the sexes.
Chris Doyle, Burke, Va.
MARQUIS D'IZOD—designer hair shirts. Do your penance in style.
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.
CHAUVENISTE—Pour les cochons.
Mark Greenberg, Bronx

FITNESSE—Intensive shampoo for the male bodybuilder.

Dorothy A. Sourlis, N.Y.C.

NAFTA SHAVE

Harold Tischelman, Cedarhurst, N.Y.

MY WIFE THINKS I HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH BROOKE SHIELDS—coffee-table book.

Linda Walsh, Benville, N.J.

MAN-DATE—D.C. escort service for the newly elected. (Not affiliated with MenS.A., the Buenos Aires service.)

Robert J. Clonick, Chicago, Ill.

RED EYE—Dubonnet for cowboys.

Ellen Burr, Truro, Mass.

IRON JOHN—A strong toilet for a strong man.

Matthew Engeman, Walldwick, N.J.

GUY WIRE—three-month trial of the new sports channel.

Paul Rheingold, Rye, N.Y.

CASANOVAULTINE—hot chocolate for the womanizing man.

Allyn Freeman, N.Y.C.

MOI—the fragrance he won't stop talking about.

Larry Laiken, N.Y.C.

HOMMEBURGERS AND HOMME FRIES—un repas man-size.

L. M. Bucsynski, Somerville, N.J.

LE SIXPLAQUE—half a dozen toothpastes bound together by a plastic cord.

Pericles Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

AIR TRUMP—sneakers for the upwardly mogul.

Shari Troy, N.Y.C.

YOUR FIRST KILT—instructional video included.

Ken McCann, Somerset, N.J.

SPERMAFROST—fertility storage containers. From Igloo.

Joel Sitrin, Alexandria, Va.

SCHNAPPSHOT—emergency flask. New from Horst.

Teresa Heines, Niskayuna, N.Y.

FIRST DOWN—feather pillow bearing the logo of your favorite NFL team.

Fred Buffa, Staten Island

PROMISE CLIPPERS—for the family man who likes his haircuts at home. Used by millions.

Rick McClellan, N.Y.C.

sp. ment.: *Bob Dean, Raleigh, N.C.*

MEINE CALVIN KLEINE—underwear for Herr.

Susan Krowitz, Port Washington, N.Y.

CUJONES—new from Stephen King.

Bill Klipper, Machipongo, Va.

DIRECTIONS—novel concept in navigation.

Carol Weiss Rosenberg, South Bend, Ind.

RALPHALON—man-size cookware for guys who eat too much.

Suzie Bolotin, Chapel Hill, N.C.

MISTERINE—mouthwash for the man with little scope.

Mark Wolfson, Lauder Hill, Fla.

AB SOLUTION—après-workout cologne.

C. C. Moynihan, Loudonville, N.Y.

MANE CHANCE—hair apparent for the hereditarily challenged.

John Blumenthal, Rye, N.Y.

THE TROUBLE WITH HAIRY—depilatory.

J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

NAUTILUST—power cologne for the power lifter.

James Vanden Bosch, Grand Rapids, Mich.

JUNG!—fragrance for the archetypal male.

L. Soth, Northfield, Minn.

BENNYHILFIGER—designer boxers by the makers of Slapstick.

Judy Miller, Los Angeles, Calif.

GILLETTINE—the last word in close shaves.

Ben Kopac, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

SIRTS—brandy-breath for the teetotaler.

Carly Mary Cady, North Hollywood, Calif.

HISS AND HEARSE—custom snake funerals.

Beryl Mendel, Chicago, Ill.

similarly: *Anthony G. Bowman, Washington, D.C.*

OLAY-OLAY-HE-HO—Swiss Performing Extract.

Patricia O. Simmons, Ann Arbor, Mich.

ORTH-ADONIS—tooth-care products for the manliest of men.

Sharon Langert, Lakewood, N.J.

MARCO POLO—pen for the itinerant businessman from Ralph Lauren.

Warren Fretwell, Syracuse, N.Y.

CALL LATER—perennial but seldom-activated telephone feature.

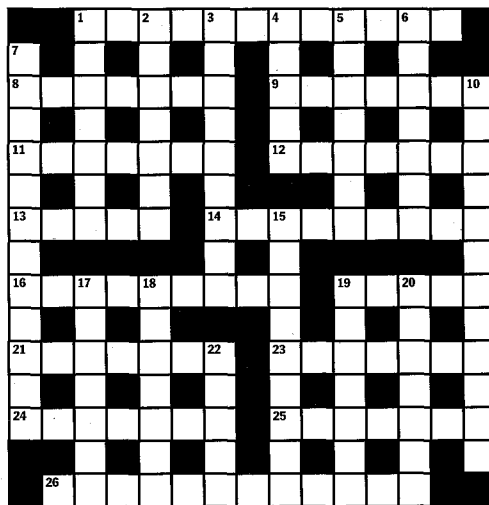
Sue Lin Chong, Washington, D.C.

Competition Rules: POSTCARDS, PLEASE, TYPEWRITTEN IF POSSIBLE. ONE ENTRY ONLY should be sent to Competition Number 899, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999, or e-mailed to 104700.2563@compuserve.com. It must be received by January 9. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of New York. Results and winners' names will appear in the February 9 issue.

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Poor U.N. food consumed by Eastern European prodigal. (5,7)
- 8 Arithmetic for letter-writers? (7)
- 9 Bill in street car test reversing into felines (3-4)
- 11 No women could be unlucky when seen through the window. (3,4)
- 12 Condition of paid player: well after six. (7)
- 13 Deposit last bit of money in one's discomfort. (3,2)
- 14 After a jiffy, one unfinished whisky is of lesser importance. (9)
- 16 Receiver backing Rose to hire about four. (9)
- 19 Gentlemen grips piano wood. (5)
- 21 Entrance for travelling singers. (7)
- 23 Sunshade—standard one—so gets left behind. (7)
- 24 Giving up protesting. (7)
- 25 More inquisitive about the first person to be more rowdy. (7)
- 26 Possibility, not rejected by The Gaslight Chancellor. (6,6)



DOWN

- 1 Margaret not here? Work on diligently! (3,4)
- 2 Like silent trumpet, starting up noisily but leaving out wobbly notes. (7)
- 3 Identifies a gin mixed up in measured portions. (9)
- 4 Senior citizen keeps religious work readily available. (2,3)
- 5 Caricature portrays a bird embracing a legislator. (7)
- 6 Good man with a bird needing grit. (7)
- 7 Missionary ain't found in resort with cheat. (5,7)
- 10 A clerk goes to a party in Sunday School—like Scheherazade & Co. (5-7)
- 15 I record data for eccentric person—Judy's man. (4,5)
- 17 Rational but common soldier is seen in pub. (7)
- 18 Changing what postman might do with twenty-second letter. (7)
- 19 Amis perhaps captures one inhabitant of a planet. (7)
- 20 This hobby reveals father's age. (7)
- 22 Set up Galileo's head in this exhibition. (5)

'Dysfunctional Rulers': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

- 1 Resinous substance
- 4 Reese of songdom
- 9 Alternative to network TV
- 14 Birthstone
- 17 — Z (the whole dictionary)
- 18 Apelike
- 19 Lake named for a tribe
- 20 Mouse's danger
- 21 Coffee dispenser
- 22 Ruler with dental problems?
- 25 Oust a lawyer
- 27 Cauterize
- 28 Berne's river
- 29 "Paradise Lost" villain
- 30 Desk-box words
- 32 Non-plussed ruler?
- 37 Boxing manager Dundee
- 39 Orbit point closest to earth
- 41 "Lord of the Rings" creature
- 42 Citrus peel
- 44 Lop the crop
- 46 In tiers
- 47 Door, in Dordogne
- 49 Ruler who posed for "Playgirl"?
- 53 Bag for the plane cabin
- 55 LaBelle or LuPone
- 56 Evel Knievel caper
- 57 Ballpark thrill
- 58 It's surrounded by eau
- 59 Viet's land, to vets
- 62 South of Leb.
- 63 Hairing aids
- 64 Meadow
- 67 Never say this
- 68 Ruler who sang soprano?
- 71 Each and every
- 72 Part of Butterfly's name
- 73 State with only one neighbor
- 74 Icky stuff
- 75 Hallow ending
- 76 Dunk
- 77 Pasta type
- 78 Jousting weapon
- 80 Bonnie's beau
- 82 Says yes

- 85 Ruler with hay fever?
- 88 Baseball's Steady Eddie
- 89 Straight — arrow
- 91 Data sci.
- 92 Condé of publishing
- 93 Pres. plane designation
- 94 Collision-safety devices
- 97 Author-director Nora
- 99 Pale ruler?
- 102 Nonpareils
- 104 Coliseum
- 107 Grand-scale tale
- 108 Plumbing woe
- 109 Prolonged attacks
- 110 Ruler born in the wrong place?
- 117 B.&O., et. al.
- 118 The yoke's on them

- 119 Revere
- 120 Flower features
- 121 Anne Baxter role, 1950
- 122 — se
- 123 Did an AAA service
- 124 Audience's view
- 125 "The best is — to come"

DOWN

- 1 Praises
- 2 Entrance courts
- 3 Ruler who never outgrew puberty?
- 4 "New Look" designer
- 5 Cassowary's cousin
- 6 Half CIV
- 7 Roundup need
- 8 Make a starting poker bet
- 9 Sonny's ex "— Wiedersehen"
- 10 Sis's sibling
- 11 Bud's comedy partner
- 12 Infuriate
- 13 Foliage
- 14 Gobble
- 15 Speedometer info.
- 16 Vulgate speech
- 18 Before yaki, in Japanese cuisine
- 23 More than dislike
- 24 "— o' Shanter"
- 26 Marauding outlaw
- 30 "— a Song Go Out of My Heart"
- 31 Webster and Wyle
- 32 Spartacus portrayer
- 33 Billy Joel's "— to Extremes"

- 34 Wimbledon winner of 1970-71
- 35 Golden-rule word
- 36 British carbine
- 38 Victorian, for one
- 40 Talk wildly
- 42 White water
- 43 Paesano's country
- 45 Small-dress category
- 47 Hereness
- 48 Hockey great
- 50 Sore-muscle application
- 51 Quiet, please!
- 52 Not like a ruler
- 54 Saunter
- 57 Tool for Markham's man
- 60 —garde
- 61 Mizzen's kin
- 63 Early spring bloomer
- 64 Ruler who wrote westerns?
- 65 Slurs over a vowel
- 66 Tijuana Brass leader
- 69 Directional abbr.
- 70 1997 Grammy-winner Braxton
- 77 Shell-game item
- 78 Moon goddess
- 79 Suffix for poly
- 81 Poe maiden
- 82 What there oughta be
- 83 Settee
- 84 Old maid
- 85 Pokes
- 86 Fall guys
- 87 To the — degree
- 90 B'way hit sign
- 94 Ark's landfall
- 95 Game at Pebble Beach
- 96 Nosy ones
- 98 Stormy weather
- 100 Lyricist Sammy
- 101 One's born days
- 103 Everglades bird
- 105 Chutzpa
- 106 Positive trait
- 108 Campus gal
- 109 Shoe underside
- 110 One of New York's finest
- 111 Tomahawk
- 112 Swearing-in reply
- 113 This minute
- 114 Before, poetically
- 115 Flightboard abbr.
- 116 Mouth muffler

